



Art with a
personal
touch
Page 15



Get to
know your
Beijing birds
Pages 20-21

Old Qianmen a new pedestrian street



Xinhua Photo

As part of its renovations to turn Qianmen Street into the city's second pedestrian street, Beijing has brought back the Dangdang rail cars of years past.
The street has been restored to its early twentieth century appearance based on historical photos.

Page 2

Torch relay touches Chinese world over

The Olympic torch relay has touched the hearts of the Chinese both home and abroad. Though fraught with foreign protesters, the torch relay has made several patriots into household names.



Photo provided by Sohu.com

Page 5

Page 3

Sichuan puts
down its
'fighting' bulls

Page 4

Lady workers
thieve for fun,
not profit

Page 8

Human search
engine fingers
wrong man

Page 9

Trumpeter
ready to jazz up
Forbidden City

Third phase of Olympic tickets available next month

By He Jianwei

The Beijing Organizing Committee for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad (BOCOG) said Wednesday the official date for the third phase of Olympic ticket sales within the mainland will be between May 5 and June 9, during which nearly 1.4 million tickets will on sale, including tickets for 16 sports and 244 matches.

During the third phase, buyers are allowed to purchase a maximum of six tickets – three tickets in each of two separate purchases – but will be allowed to buy six more after payment.

Among the 16 sports are track and field, baseball, basketball, beach volleyball, boxing, flat-water canoe and kayak, mountain biking, equestrian, football, handball, field hockey, the

modern pentathlon, rowing, softball, marathon swimming, volleyball, and wrestling.

For each event, handicapped seating will be available – about 20 thousand tickets total are offered in this category.

Buyers can visit designated Bank of China ticket outlets or sign-up at the BOCOG Ticketing Center Web site (tickets.beijing2008.cn) to apply for tickets.

Like the first two phases, this third period of ticket sales is only open for individual sales: group sales are not permitted. Ticket purchasers must apply with valid identification.

Unlike the first two phases, tickets sold during this phase will be provided on a first-come, first-serve basis. Available tickets may be reserved for a limited period of time, but if these tickets are



The picture of the Bird's Nest is the main visual element on the tickets. CFP Photo

not paid for by deadline, they will be canceled and resold.

The design for the tickets was unveiled on Wednesday. It

has a picture of the National Stadium, known as the Bird's Nest, and a cloud of promise as main visual elements.

Dangdang cars return to Qianmen Street

By Zhang Dongya

Dangdang, a trolley familiar to Beijing's senior citizens, returned to Qianmen Street and began trial operations yesterday.

The car was the first modern vehicle in Beijing and ceased operation in 1958. Its tracks have been rebuilt, and Dangdang will be the only transportation vehicle on the new pedestrian street.

Qianmen Street has been restored to its appearance in the early twentieth century based on historical photos, and is now the city's second pedestrian street, Wangfujing being the first.

The new street stretches from the southern end of Tian'anmen Square to Zhushikou, and is almost a kilometer long.

The most distinctive feature of new Qianmen Street is old-time street lamps. The lamps are shaped like bird cages, rattle drum and tanghulu, sugar-coated crabapples.

Wupailou, the Five Archways of Zhengyang Gate, or Arrow Tower, has been restored based on its original appearance. It has six red posts with two stone lions



Dangdang cars began running on Qianmen Street, Wednesday.

Photo by Lion Wang

at the foot of each.

Shops on both sides of the street are painted grey. Some laozihao, time-honored shops, in the area like Qianjude maintain their traditional decor with embossed walls and palace

paintings.

Extending from the Arrow Tower in the North to Zhushikou Street in the South, Qianmen Street is a flourishing commercial street with a long history.

The massive redevelopment

of Qianmen Street, which began in late 2002, is part of the city's efforts to refurbish old city areas in preparation for the Olympics.

Redevelopment is almost complete, and it is expected to open during the May Day holiday.

Gov signs extradition treaties with Aus, France

By Zhang Dongya

The Standing Committee of the National People's Congress approved China's extradition treaties with Australia and France Thursday.

The extradition treaties between China and France, China and Australia were signed last March and September. The two international treaties are considered helpful to enhance the development of their bilateral relationships on the cooperation in the judicial field.

As scores of corrupt officials flee to the US, Canada and Australia, China needs to step up

negotiations with those countries to conclude extradition treaties, officials said.

"I think China will sign an extradition agreement with Canada in the near future," Huang Feng, a Beijing Normal University professor, said.

Canada is considered a special country in the signing of extradition treaties since smuggling boss Lai Changxing, accused of masterminding a billion-dollar smuggling ring in Fujian Province, fled there in 1999. The country pushed for repatriation of illegal immigrants rather than extradition in Lai Changxing's case,

Huang said.

Though China has promised that no extradited person will be executed, some countries remain hesitant about signing agreements because statue law continues to carry a provision for the death penalty. "This is the major impediment between China and EU countries," Huang said.

At the NPC session last year, a spokesman from the People's Supreme Court said that a commitment to not execute Lai Changxing was a reasonable price to get him on trial.

The number of corrupt offi-

cials fleeing abroad has declined gradually in recent years. "It will decline sharply with more international cooperation, especially with the implementation of the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC)," Gao Yuntao, deputy head of international cooperation bureau of the Supreme People's Procuratorate, said.

The government has signed extradition agreements with 31 nations, including Russia, Thailand and other surrounding countries. Its first extradition agreement was signed with Thailand in 1993.

Sanlitun bars sign on to narcotic ban

By Li Fenghua

The Chaoyang Public Security Bureau recently signed a narcotics ban agreement with 71 bars and cafes in the Sanlitun area as part of the district's efforts to stamp out drug use. According to the agreement, a business will be closed down if police bust any narcotics dealers on their premises.

The bar's legal owner will be forced to take responsibility for drug use and traffic within his bar.

The Beijing Public Security Bureau said it will focus on narcotics use in public entertainment venues. "A lot of measures have been taken to combat narcotic use the last few years. By the end of 2006, Beijing had achieved its goal of no narcotic sales in public venues," Fu Zhenghua, vice president of the Beijing Public Security Bureau, said.

The Pure Girl Bar and Fengkuang Cafe were raided by police earlier this month on April 4. Police caught more than 20 persons, including eight foreigners, trafficking narcotics. The narcotics campaign has led to 36 arrests and a recovery of 2.2 kilograms of narcotics. Police said 21 of the arrested were foreigners. The two bars were closed down.

The police are currently expanding their anti-narcotics efforts from public venues to include bars, apartments and villages in the city outskirts.

Brief news

Beijing-Shanghai high-speed railway construction starts

The Beijing-Shanghai high-speed railway, which will travel 350 kilometers per hour, broke ground last Friday. The 1,318 kilometer long rail, which will be completed in five years, will cut the journey time from Beijing to Shanghai in half – down to five hours.

Disabled set for tax breaks, fee exemption

Disabled people who run businesses will be subject to favorable tax policies and exemption from administrative charges according to a draft law amendment. The amendment stipulates that disabled people need not pay government administrative fees if they operate private businesses.

Gov publishes draft regulation on food safety

The new draft food safety law, which lays out penalties from fines to life imprisonment for producers of substandard food, was published on the national legislature's Web site last Sunday for public discussion. The draft is open to public comment until May 20. Comments will be delivered to the NPC Standing Committee for discussion.

Foreign students need not leave during Olympics

Overseas media reports stated that foreign students would have to leave the country during the August Olympic Games were "totally fabricated," the Ministry of Education said. During the Olympics and Paralympics, foreign students may stay, and some have already been chosen to participate as Olympic volunteers, ministry spokesman Wang Xuming said.

(By Han Manman)

Barreled water causes Hep A

By Huang Daohen

The Ministry of Health has ordered quality checks on barreled water around the country after polluted water in Guiyang, Guizhou Province, caused a recent outbreak of Hepatitis A, the *Beijing Youth Daily* reported Monday.

The polluted water, produced under the local label Zhuyuan, caused as many as 300 people to become infected with hepatitis A, the *Guizhou Daily* reported. Most

of the afflicted are students from the Guiyang Institute.

An investigation panel composed of experts from the health ministry and the local government started to inspect the incident this past weekend.

Experts found that Zhuyuan water was heavily polluted from the end of February to early March. The factory was also lax in its sterilization practices, and the bottles of water did not meet hygienic require-

ments.

The ministry issued an emergency notice requiring all regions to immediately begin supervision and inspection of barreled drinking water and asked the food inspection authorities at all levels to halt the sale and use of Zhuyuan water and related products from Guiyang Nanming Natural Mineral Drink, the label's producer.

A total of 336 cases of Hepatitis A had been reported in Guiyang

City, of which 299 had been confirmed and 37 are suspected, the *Guiyang Daily* reported. The victims were isolated and hospitalized at the local hospital. Thus far, most of the suspected infected have recovered, the report said.

As of press time, no public health warnings connected to barreled water were issued in Beijing, an official with the Chaoyang District hygiene supervision authority surnamed Li said.

"We still have not received any emergency notice about the barreled water," Li said. According to the Ministry of Health's spot check plan, the hygiene supervision department must carry out spot checks on the barreled water twice a year before they may circulate in the market.

The city will launch a project to attach electronic identification labels to every barrel of drinking water before the Olympics, Li said.

Not-fighting bulls' free ride over

By Jackie Zhang

Five bulls imported from Spain in 2006 were electrocuted last weekend in Chengdu, Sichuan Province. Since their import into China, the five had not participated in any bullfights. The Law on the Entry and Exit Animal and Plant Quarantine required the bulls be given "a humane disposal."

The bulls were imported in November, 2006 by a culture company in Beijing. The company planned to organize a bullfighting event in Chengdu. However, the event was postponed several times because of financial issues and the Spanish matadors' passport problems. The five bulls were left at Longquan Yangguang Sports Center.

"Many people did not know we were feeding all five bulls," a staff member from the center said. "The center was a partner of the bullfighting performance. Then, the event was postponed and the organizing committee was dismissed. We got stuck with the bulls." At first, a professional trainer from Mexico stayed to look after the bulls, but she left at the beginning of last year.

Because the bulls were imported from Spain for bullfighting performances, no one knew what to do with them. The person from the culture company had never had contacts with the sport. "Each bull was valued at US \$3,000. We arranged for people to look after them every day. Each bull ate more than 1,000 yuan of food. We could not continue to shoulder the financial burden," a man from the center said.

Early this year, people from the culture company in Beijing contacted the sports center and said the performance could be organized in February. The event was again canceled due to financial problems.

The entry and exit animal quarantine department in Chengdu made the decision to cull the bulls. According to the Law on the Entry and Exit Animal and Plant Quarantine, bulls that are killed during bullfighting or who have not fought in any bullfighting events must be disposed of humanely.

Schools to add climbing walls



New climbing equipment is coming to more Chaoyang schools.

Photo provided by Beijing Youth Daily

By Annie Wei

Chaoyang District school, which has limited space for outdoor activity, will assemble and install climbing walls in 160 primary schools.

Feng Changling, a director from

the Chaoyang District's physical education department, said each school could build different climbing walls based on the school's situation. Many schools have built climbing walls along the campus walls with sand pits

at their base for safety. Climbing is part of the Chaoyang's physical education program, and is designed to engage young students in fun sport and exercise.

"Traditional sports equipment

like parallel bars are more dangerous and boring," Feng said. Thus far, 45 primary schools have installed the new equipment, and wall construction in another 90 schools will be completed this year.

Begging dwarf latched onto victims' legs

By Annie Wei

A 40 year-old dwarf beggar in Wenzhou, Fujian Province, frightened people with his extremely aggressive begging tactics.

The beggar, toting an aluminum bowl and meter-long wooden stick, would rush people in the downtown area. First, he used the stick to stop his mark. If the mark did not immediately flee, he would jump and grip the person's legs with his arms.

Over 70 percent of the people he latched onto were forced to pay out, otherwise he would follow them

shouting curses.

Local supervisors said that they received complaints about the beggar more than 10 times per day, and that of all the beggars on the street, his was consistently the worst.

He harassed not only random passersby, but also tourists - something the street vendors said put a dent in their business.

However, street supervisors said they could do nothing about the man because they were not an official branch of law enforcement.

When local police arrived to detain the man, he bit them.

Police said they received calls from people on the street, but when they arrived, no one was willing to stay for deposition.

Some people said they would call the police if they were frightened, but did not want to make a scene with the beggar.

"If I stayed to help with the police detaining the dwarf and what I did ended up on the Internet, I would be worried that everyone thought I was bullying a little person," a bystander said.

The man was detained for five days and released with a



The beggar was very aggressive to shoppers.

Photo provided by Wenzhou Wanbao

warning, in accordance with local security regulations.

Roddick, Ivanovic bound for China Open



Ana Ivanovic, top woman tennis player

Photo by Artist Yuan

By Huang Daohen

US tennis player Andy Roddick and women's world number two player Ana Ivanovic are in the line up for this year's China Open, set for September 20 - 28 at the Beijing Tennis Center, the event's organizing committee said Wednesday.

Roddick is skipping the Olympics, but he is anticipated to attend the China Open. The world number six ranked player will be joined by fifth-ranked Spanish player David Ferrer and women's world number five Jelena Jankovic, who won second place last year and will make a third

appearance at the tournament.

"I will have a break after the US Open to adjust myself for a couple of days, and I might be hungry for the China Open by then," Serb Ivanovic said in a video message during the news conference.

Both men's and women's champions, Chile's Fernando Gonzalez and Hungarian Szavay, have confirmed their entry to the event and will defend their crowns.

This year's men's and women's events will be held at the same time, which means all 88 matches will be finished in nine

days, one week earlier than the previous tournaments, according to organizers.

A tennis themed travel program will coincide with the event. Held in cooperation with the China Youth Travel Agency, it will provide Tennis fans from home and abroad a route to visit Beijing's sites of interest and the Olympic venues.

Starting in 2009, the China Open will be one of the crown jewel events on the women's tour and an ATP 500 tournament for men as part of Beijing's plans to secure a sporting legacy from the Games.

Workers under pressure find pleasure in pilfering

By Li Fenghua

A woman surnamed Fan, 34, was recently arrested for stealing from a supermarket and is being detained in the Chongwen district.

Last March, Fan stole a bag of food from one supermarket. "I was just letting off some steam. I was in a bad mood, under a lot of pressure and am unsatisfied with my job," Fan said.

Her entertainment company, established 10 years ago, has been the prey of many swindles, and her marriage recently collapsed.

But the Chongwen Public Security Bureau says Fan is hardly

alone in her crime. Women over age 20 are the most frequent supermarket thieves, and all of them have an excuse.

"One woman we arrested, surnamed Liu, steals just for the thrill of it. Most of the stolen commodities are worth about 100 - 200 yuan, such as shampoos, facials and bags of dried goods," Li Yuan, a police officer from Chongwen Public Security Bureau, said.

Liu was born to a family of government office workers. She is not for want of money and is currently enrolled in local training classes. She said she stole for

the rush.

"Stealing in the supermarket is very common. It happens almost everyday. Stolen items range from batteries to the underwear. Some of the thieves are locals: Beijing's office workers, government employees and students. Most of the thieves are women," a security guard at a supermarket said.

Thieves, when caught, usually choose to pay a fine to the supermarket rather than be taken to a police station. One man paid 3,000 yuan for stealing four eggs in the supermarket because he was afraid of being fired by his company if

taken to the police.

The shops from which Fan stole from had no surveillance systems and usually only two or three employees present. Police said the small staff can hardly keep track of every customer and prevent loss.

"To be safe, the store should be separated from the business area and its clerks should pay attention to customers with large bags or nervous facial expressions. If any theft happens, the store should call the police - store owners have no authority to punish thieves," police said.

Country finds its first credit slaves

By Zhang Dongya

A survey released Monday by Zhilian, a recruitment agency in China showed that, as many as 40 percent of office workers are slaves to credit cards based on a sample group of 6,000 workers.

Credit card slaves, or card debtors, are people who use many credit cards but fail to pay their bills. They use one card to pay another card's bill and can never pay off their debt.

According to the survey, these workers have entered an era of paying by card. They carry bank cards, credit cards and store membership cards. Nearly all of them have bank cards, and 90 percent have credit cards. Half have points saving cards and discount cards.

The frequency of credit card use has spiked to 72 percent, now ranking first on the list. As many as 20 percent of the card users reported feeling pushed to pay with plastic.

"I owe the bank over 20,000 yuan and the bills are coming soon. I have no choice but to borrow from friends," an office worker surnamed Zhang said.

About 40 percent of credit card users surveyed failed to pay the total due, and only paid the minimum payment. Paying only the minimum payment carries a high interest penalty, Ba Ran, a Zhilian consultant said.

Although more than 60 percent of the workers thought it was convenient to use credit cards, especially during travel or business trips, nearly 20 percent admitted to being perpetual debtors.

At the end of 2007, there were more than 90 million credit cards in circulation in China, up 82 percent over the previous year.

Largest Ferris wheel spins in Tianjin



The biggest Ferris wheel in the world in Tianjin, larger than the London Eye, has been completed with 48 carriages.

Photo by Cheng Zi

Auto China 2008 held in new exhibition center

By Li Fenghua

The 10th Beijing International Automotive Exhibition will be held from April 22-28 in the New China International Exhibition Center in Shunyi district.

Located in the Beijing Shunyi Tianzhu Airport Industrial Zone, the New China International Exhibition Center includes eight modernized exhibition halls. All eight indoor exhibition halls will display passenger vehicles.

Auto China 2008 stands to become Asia's largest automotive exhibition with 2,100 exhibitors from 18 countries and regions and seven world premiers. For the first time, the show will display both



New exhibition center

Photo by Wang Xiaoxiao

private and commercial vehicles, as well as auto parts and after-market products.

Auto China has become one of the most famous auto exhibition brands all over the world since it debuted in 1990. The biennial

auto event has been listed as one of the international A-class auto shows together with the Frankfurt, Geneva, Paris, Tokyo and Detroit shows. Wang Xia, secretary general of Auto China 2008 Organizing Committee Secretariat, said.

In 2007, China's auto output and sales reached 8.8 million units and the numbers are expected to exceed 10 million this year. The country is expected to become the second largest auto manufacturing country and second largest auto market in the world.

Nearly all of the multinational automakers registered to attend the show. Leading automakers,

such as Volkswagen AG, Daimler AG and Toyota, considered Auto China 2008 as the most important event outside their respective home countries.

A lot of major state-owned groups, including FAW, Dongfeng, SAIC, Chang'an, BAIC, GAIC and China Aviation Industry II and China North Industries Group, will attend the expo with their full line-ups.

Global super-luxury brands will exhibit products in the E4 area, including Bentley, Lamborghini, Bugatti, Ferrari, Maserati, Aston Martin, Porsche, Rolls Royce, Spyker and refitted luxury vehicles.

Dead whistle blower may have met official wrath

By Li Fenghua

Li Guofu, who blew the whistle on a luxurious government office building in Anhui Province, died in the First Prison Hospital of Anhui last month.

According to the autopsy report, Li died of suicide. But his parents doubt the autopsy report and think it was cooked as a cover-up. Public suspicion has pressed Yingquan District investigators to reopen Li's case.

Last August, Li went to Beijing and accused Zhang Zhi'an, head of Yingquan district, of illegally repossessing farmland to put up his own luxurious office buildings. Li was arrested by Yingquan District police immediately after he returned.

According to the report of *Chinese Youth Daily*, on the afternoon of Li's death, his case director Zheng Tao, president of the district's Anti-embezzlement Bureau, appeared in the prison and a letter from Li Guofu to Zhang Zhi'an was found in Zhang's suitcase.

He wrote of regret over accusing Zhang, and said he was instigated by someone else to come forward and asked for Zhang's forgiveness.

The luxury office, which cost about 30 million yuan to build, was constructed several years ago. The European-style building was called "White House" by the local residents. It was built on the former site of a primary school. The students were relocated to an abandoned school built in the 1960s.

"The financial revenue of Yingquan district was about 100 million yuan, and the building cost about 30 million yuan. But the average revenue of the district's residents is only about 2,000 yuan," a source said.

Most of the repossessed land was taken from Gaojing village, and villagers were paid 20,500 yuan per 633 square-meters as compensation. "All this land was fertile farmland. The government didn't honor its promise to change the villagers' hukou to city hukou, and none of the welfare they promised has been given," a Gaojing villager said.

At the 7th plenary session of the Central Discipline Inspection Commission, President Hu Jintao emphasized the importance of construction of CPC leaders' style of work and he required a pragmatic and simple work atmosphere.

According to the government report issued last March, Premier Wen Jiabao seriously criticized the construction of luxurious office buildings. "In order to construct an economical government, luxurious offices are prohibited to reduce administration costs," he said.

Torch lights Chinese hearts



Jin Jing: Angel in a wheelchair

Jin Jing, the 27-year-old Shanghai girl and one-legged fencer is famous for having put her body on the line for her country.

During the Paris leg of the relay on April 7, Jin tightly grasped the torch as hysterical protesters tried to snatch it. The wild protesters beat her and one angry man pulled her hair. She held onto the torch tightly and guarded it with her body. During the struggle, her chin and shoulder were scratched.

Since then, the images of her fiercely protecting the flame from attackers and smiling in her wheelchair graced front pages all over China. Her story has been told through newspapers, TV shows and on the Internet.

People marvel at her courage and call her the "smiling angel in the wheelchair." As for her heroic actions, Jing humbly said "Any Chinese or Olympics-loving torch-bearer would protect the torch under such circumstances."

"I was moved to tears seeing so many Chinese students waving national flags and singing our national anthem along the route."

Jin also appealed to the Chinese to stop boycotting Carrefour as the reduction of Carrefour's revenue in China may lead to the salaries of Carrefour's Chinese employees to drop and cause personal suffering and loss.

When Jin was nine, doctors found a malignant tumor in her right ankle, which led to the amputation of part of her leg. She later returned to school after a year of chemotherapy. Jin successfully battled her cancer and became a member of the Shanghai Wheelchair Fencing Team in 2001. She picked the sport up quickly and won silver and bronze medals in the 2002

By Han Manman

The Olympic torch relay touched hundreds of millions of Chinese hearts. Traveling this holy road were some common Chinese people. With a united wish and their own ways to protect the country, their names became well known overnight by the whole nation.

Busan Far East and the South Pacific Games.

Her friends said Jing was always cheerful and upbeat, despite her disability. Like many other young girls, she also saved her money to buy fashion magazines and liked shopping and singing.

Xiao Gang: Shares his red heart

The "red heart China" designer Xiao Gang had no idea that his design of the "red heart" on MSN would bring such a huge effect.

About 2.3 million Chinese MSN users have added the pattern of the "red heart" and the



French President Nicolas Sarkozy on Monday invited Jin Jing to visit France again. The president's invitation was delivered in a letter presented by French Senate President Christian Poncelet in Shanghai. CFP Photo

English word "China" in front of their online signatures to show their unity and patriotism, MSN China spokesman Feng Guangshun said last Thursday.

According to *The First*, when Xiao Gang, 24, who works in an IT company in Beijing, saw a signature collection campaign launched by netizens to protect

the torch and support China on April 9, he made up his mind to use the "red heart" symbol and the English word "China" to express "I love China". Shortly after the launch, the use of the red heart China creation increased dramatically.

Xiao Gang did not expect that his work would bring such huge business opportunities to the businessman. Goods connected with "red heart" range from T-shirts to gift boxes are all sold well.

Zhou Xiu: Tears of joy

After several days' search among Chinese netizens, the subject of a widely-spread picture has been found. She is Zhou Xiu, an economics student from Shandong University, currently working as an intern at the Lehman Brothers Investment Bank.

For London's Olympic torch relay on April 6, lots of spectators gathered to excitedly greet the

Olympic flame. Zhou was captured by a photographer as she was moved from cheers and tears to an emotion-filled smile by the historical relay. The picture quickly gained popularity online with netizens who eagerly wanted to know her name.

Why the tears? Maybe only other Chinese people can understand, but because of that emotional connection, the picture gained huge attention and moved many netizens.

Zhou said they sang the national anthem repeatedly when watching the torch relay. "There have been many prejudiced reports and we thought the Chinese were being misunderstood and we felt a sense of grievance. So, when I saw so many overseas Chinese coming to support our country and watch the torch, I was brought to tears. But I thought I shouldn't cry as we should let everyone know that the Chinese are strong and always smile even facing adversity, so I tried to smile through my tears when I saw the camera."



Zhou Xiu tries to smile for the camera.

Photo from Sohu.com

Rao Jin: a website founder

Rao Jin and his Web site earned fame immediately after a Western reporter asked the spokesman from the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Qin Gang, during a news conference in March 27, about the government's opinion of this Web site.

Rao Jin, 24, the founder of a small technology company in Beijing, said he was very angry when he saw foreign journalists' prejudice against China and he created a Web site, anti-cnn.com, on March 20, to document the mistakes and bias in Western media reporting.

"CNN is just one example of Western media. What stands behind the distortion is misunderstanding and bias toward China," he said. Rao put almost all his time into the anti-CNN Web site and said he has no intention of closing it.

Rao had been a faithful viewer of CNN and other Western media like many other well-educated young Chinese. During the Tibet riots, besides watching CNN, Rao received information and photos from a personal contact in Tibet. This helped him develop his own

perspective on the issue.

"The report triggered the ire of many Chinese as that was not really what happened in China," Rao said when answering the Washington Post's question about the CNN report. His words were quoted in the *Washington Post*. "The newspaper report is comparatively reporting the facts," Rao said.

Tens of thousands of netizens visit the Web site everyday. Rao also opened an English forum and invites Western netizens and reporters to come and converse with Chinese netizens.

Now, Rao, together with many of his friends, still work hard to document the mistakes and bias in Western media. "We will insist on doing it," he said.

Rao's father Rao Zhizhou is a bank clerk. Though he does not use a computer or the Internet, the father knew what his son was doing through phone calls. The father said he watches CCTV news reports every day. Neighbors who saw his son on TV always came to tell him. "I know he is doing the right thing. We support him. Every Chinese who has a conscience



The Web site is the first to document the mistakes and bias in Western media reporting.

Photo from Anti-CNN.com

will support him, too!"

"Being famous is not good for a businessman," Rao said when he accepted the CCTV interview.

Find economic outlet for patriotic zeal

(Reuters) – Beijing has called on its citizens to channel their “patriotic zeal” into the economy in a sign the government wants to cool the nationalistic backlash against the west over criticism of the Olympics and Tibet.

Chinese Internet sites have been awash with calls to stop buying French goods and stop shopping at Carrefour stores.

Following prominent local news reports, Chinese officials and citizens have also vented outrage at a commentator on CNN television who spoke of Chinese “goons” and “junk” products.

But in a sign that Beijing may be moving to cool public anger, Xinhua news agency called for “patriotic zeal to concentrate on development.”

The official commentary that appeared late last Thursday night said the boycott demands were an “unadorned expression of patriotic zeal and a sincere demonstration of public opinion.”

“Patriotic zeal must be transformed into concrete actions to do one’s own work well,” said the commentary widely distributed in the Chinese media.

Expert comment

By Huang Daohen

Referring to the public’s recent upsurge of patriotic sentiment, several senior Chinese intellectuals called on the public to choose a rational way to express their love of country.

“What happened in France showed that French people do not understand Chinese history, especially the Tibet issue,” Zhou Xing, from the College of Art and Communication of Beijing Normal University, said.

“We need to improve foreigners’ understanding about China. It is a mistake to turn to extreme actions,” he said.

Shen Dingli of Fudan University in Shanghai said the violence of the demonstrations against the torch may set a poor

example for Chinese people.

“Such behavior does not help educate the Chinese people and makes the Chinese government and people respect less the west’s notion of ‘rule of law,’ he said.

“We should respect the right of people to disagree with us,” he said, “but still make an effort to inform them what is right and wrong.”

“If we continue to allow some extreme emotions to be unleashed without control, China will suffer even greater damage,” Shen said.

Others expressed the understanding about the patriotism among public.

“Of course, we are angry with disruption

of the Olympic torch relay and the activities to split China,” Zhang Shengjun, deputy dean of Institute of Political Science and International Studies of the Beijing Normal University, said. “But we should not be as irrational as they are when voicing patriotism.”

“However, as a country becomes ever more connected with the world, it will have to deal with conflicts,” Zhang said. “Whether or not it handles them well will affect the country’s development.”

China should develop friendship with other countries, he said. “I think it will win understanding and support worldwide if we introduce the positive side of the country and its people.”

Reverse image of car industry



Chinese car manufacturers’ efforts on the quality and customer satisfaction during the past decades have paid off and improved their image. IC Photo

(FT) – China’s emerging car makers are often the butt of jokes in industry circles abroad, where they have a reputation for building shoddy cars with knocked-off designs and eccentric model names such as Cool Bear, Tiggo or Dingle.

But the derision is dying down as Chinese car makers begin to produce better-looking and higher-quality cars in a drive to capture local market share and enter foreign markets.

At this week’s Auto China show in Beijing, local producers are unveiling a new generation of models with better engines and original designs that bear the mark of their work with foreign automotive suppliers such as Bosch and design houses like Pininfarina.

Chery Automobile, which started in small cars, is showcasing new emissions-cutting technology and a range of higher-class cars.

Rival car maker Geely’s line-up includes the Tiger, a low-slung Italian-designed concept,

or non-production, car with styling that owes more to Alfa Romeo than Asian value brands such as Kia. The company says the car exemplifies “an aggressive and confident Geely.”

“We want to use new technology, improve quality, then improve customer satisfaction and after-sales service,” Li Shufu, Geely’s chairman, said. “Then we can lift the brand.”

Chinese manufacturers are already increasing their sales in south-east Asia, South Africa, Latin America, eastern Europe, central Asia and the Middle East. They also want to break into western Europe and North America, where few are selling vehicles yet.

Industry analysts say the damage to Chinese car makers’ image from their early missteps could take years to overcome.

“That is the challenge for Chinese manufacturers: the Made In China reputation has been damaged so badly they will need to offer significant discounts,” one consultant said.

Chinese car makers are aware of their reputation, and are investing heavily in foreign equipment and knowhow in a drive to improve quality and bolster the prices they can command.

Great Wall, one of the biggest rising car makers, has installed a state-of-the-art crash test facility at its plant in northern China, using equipment and dummies imported from the US.

“We have to build up quality to change people’s perceptions of locally built cars,” Wang Feng Ying, Great Wall’s president, told an industry conference at the weekend.

Great Wall and its peers are having to defend their businesses against the big foreign brands.

China has more than 100 brands on the market, more than in North America or Japan. International brands are targeting the same business in China.

Macao to limit casino growth

(FT) – Macao is to rein in the growth of its gambling industry by extending a moratorium on the issue of new casino licenses and freezing land allocations for the construction of gaming developments.

In the first quarter of this year, gaming revenues in the territory soared 62 percent year-on-year to US \$3.7 billion – exceeding the Las Vegas Strip and Atlantic City’s revenues combined.

Edmund Ho, Macao chief executive, yesterday told legislators about steps the special administrative region would take.

They include a freeze on land allocations for future casino developments that could affect some projects planned by the six companies currently allowed to operate gaming establishments in the territory. Mr Ho also said a government moratorium on the number of casino operators, which is due to expire next year, would remain in place “for the foreseeable future.”

The territory’s casino industry was opened to overseas investment in 2002.

Business climates top in East Asia

(Forbes) – Local governments throughout the country are improving business regulations and making it easier for the private sector to grow, according to a report released on Tuesday by the International Finance Corporation of the World Bank Group and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

The “Doing Business in China 2008” report compared the environments for private business in 30 Chinese cities by measuring four key indicators, including convenience of starting a business, registering of property, obtaining credit and enforcing contracts.

While progress was underway in all parts of the country, cities in the coastal and southern regions have implemented more extensive reforms.

The report shows there are many opportunities for Chinese cities to improve their investment climate. Examples of effective reforms could be found both within the country and from outside, Penelope Brook, director for Doing Business at the World Bank Group, said.

Work begins on largest panda breeding center

(AFP) – The world’s largest panda breeding center is being built in south-west China, an official at the country’s biggest sanctuary for the notoriously sex-shy animals said Tuesday.

The new center, which will house 200 pandas, will be an extension to current facilities at the Wolong Nature Reserve in Sichuan Province, an official Zhang Hemin told AFP.

“It will be the world’s largest panda research center based on its area and functions,” Zhang said. “The first period of construction will be finished by the end of this year.”

Besides pens for feeding and breeding, the base will also include an expansive playground, Xinhua news agency reported.

Pandas, one of the world’s most endangered species, are a national treasure.

By the end of 2007, Wolong Nature Reserve, which spans 2,000 square kilometers, had bred 130 captive pandas from an original 10, *China Daily* reported.

Gov cut stamp duty to revive stock markets

By Huang Daohen

The government yesterday decided to cut the tax on share trading to support stocks after a 35 percent plunge in the benchmark index.

The stamp duty charged on stock trades was lowered to 0.1 percent from 0.3 percent effective yesterday, the state council noted on its Web site.

This is the government's second effort to stem decline. The government said on the weekend that controlling investors in listed companies who sell more than 1 per-

cent of a stock within a month must do so in single trades. However, the new rule had only a modest impact as investors remained cautious about the market.

The Shanghai Composite Index rose 8.5 percent to 3583.03 yesterday after the announcement. Nearly US \$2 trillion was wiped from the value of equities this year.

"This is the most effective thing the government could have done in the short term to give the market more confidence," Michelle Qi, a manager at Bank of Communica-

tions, said. "The market will bottom out. It's a clear signal from the government that it thinks the decline has been excessive," he said.

"We will see the Shanghai Composite Index climb to around 4,000 points on the news," Wu Kan, a fund manager at Dazhong Insurance, said. "How far the market will rise depends on whether the government will successfully curb inflation and avoid slowing economic growth too much."

This was the country's ninth adjustment of its stamp duty.

The government tripled the tax on stock trading to three yuan per 1,000 yuan of shares on May 30 last year to cool the rally that was drawing more than 300,000 new investors a day.

The surprise action dented the key stock index by as much as 20 percent. Although the market recovered later, investors still complained that they were faced with uncertainties over trading costs.

The country cut the stamp tax to 0.3 percent in 1991 from 0.6 percent for the first time.

Gov cracks down on markets rat holes

(FT) — China's securities regulator has banned one fund manager from the country's capital markets for life and another for seven years as a warning to the industry to clean up its lax internal controls.

The two managers were banned after buying shares in companies their funds invested in and then selling them for a profit "C a practice known as "building a rat hole" in Chinese.

Tang Jian, a former manager for China International Fund Management, a joint venture between JPMorgan and Shanghai International Trade and Investment, was banned for life after storing 1.53 million yuan in his "rat hole," according to the China Securities Regulatory Commission (CSRC).

New York in China Center opens for business

By Huang Daohen

The New York in China Center, a public-private partnership between the Asian American Business Development Center and New York state, opened in Beijing Monday.

The new facility will provide support in China to New York state businesses, particularly small- and medium-sized companies, seeking to do business in China but without proper resources to set up their own offices.

The center will also offer consulting services to Chinese companies interested in setting up operations in New York.

Before the center opened, New York never had an official representative office in China in more than 30 years of US-China trade.

Eastern Airlines punished for careless management

By Huang Daohen

China Eastern Airlines, a Shanghai-headquartered air carrier was banned from servicing several routes on which pilots made unscheduled return flights.

Between March 32 and April 1, pilots did not arrive at 21 flight destinations. One flight was due to aircraft malfunction, two were due to bad weather, four flights were for "non-technical" reasons, five for low visibility and nine with reasons yet to be reported, Xinhua reported.

The former routes have been handed over to other airlines, and China Eastern Airlines was fined 1.5 million yuan and asked to improve its management and strengthen pilot morale.

Lan Club opens in Shanghai

By Gan Tian

Lan Lounge and Restaurant, a local club, will open its second branch next month in Shanghai, the Southern Beauty Group said.

The club has gained fame both home and abroad since it opened in 2006. Diners said its atmosphere was a merging of New York and Paris. The new Lan will be more than a restaurant, but an exhibition center, a club and a shop.

Female tycoon found in violation of labor law

By Huang Daohen

Nine Dragons Paper, owned by China's wealthiest woman Zhang Yin, was recently found to violate China labor laws according to a report released by a Hong Kong student-based labor group, which called the company a "sweatshop."

The report, published by Students Against Corporate Misbehavior (SACOM), said workers were exploited by Nine Dragons Paper, the largest producer of containerboard products in China and one of the largest in the world.

Serious accidents were frequent, and workers are regularly crushed by falling goods or flattened in rollers, the report said. When accidents occurred, nearby workers were fined 300 to 3,000 yuan for negligence.

The report pointed out that nearly half of the workers were unsigned, temporary workers with no benefits or legal employment status.

The report called for Zhang to step down from her seat on the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.

SACOM demanded investors use their influence and refuse to trade the company's shares — a hard sell in Hong Kong, where unaudited results for the last half of 2007 showed a sales jump of 44 percent and a gross profit of about 1.6 billion yuan.

Zhang refused to comment on the issue and said she would hold a press conference next week to tell the truth.

The company's secretary, who gave only the name Zhao, said the report was propaganda by SACOM. "We welcome reporters to visit our factory and carry out an investigation, either unannounced or public. We assure the public the violations cited in the report are fallacy," Zhao said.

Kong Xianghong, vice chairman of the Guangdong Federation of Trade Unions, said Wednesday that Nine Dragons Paper was far from a sweatshop.

Kong said the trade union sent a panel to investigate and found the treatment "good." "The workers receive a 150-yuan monthly subsidy for food, and the company is more like a university," Kong said.



The female tycoon is suspected of violating Chinese labor law in her company.

IC Photo



Starbucks' customers feel 'shorted'.

IC Photo

Starbucks shortlists smallest cups

By Annie Wei

Starbucks stopped offering customers its small, or in Starbucks lingo, "short," cups of coffee.

The lowest prices for latte, American coffee and Macchiato used to be 22, 17 and 26 yuan respectively. Now the prices are 25, 21 and 29 yuan.

Store members said Starbucks did not engage in a price hike, but that the company had discontinued its short cups. It also changed its computer software to prevent price input for short cups.

Li Jing, from the company's public relations department, told *Beijing Youth Daily* that Starbucks did not offer short cups in other countries. It was added to the system when it entered China in 1999 to cater to local customers.

Short cups accounted for a very small percentage of total global sales. The company decided to cancel the size as part of its effort to internationally standardize Starbucks' offerings, Li said.

Local customers remained suspicious.

Ms Jiang, a woman who works in the World Trade Center office, said Chinese customers are not used to drinking large quantities of coffee. She previously only purchased small cups.

According to a new economic book article about the secrets of big and small sizes, the costs of a big cup and a small one are almost the same, but selling big cups yields a higher profit margin.

Starbucks Beijing said customers could still get short cups if they request them, though customers who visited the city's Starbucks outlets reported being denied the size.

'Human search engine' strikes again



This picture was later identified by the "human search engine" as that of Tan after her sudden death. However, the online campaign is being questioned for its moral standard.

IC Photo

By Huang Daohen

A 44-year-old Chinese American living in Utah was harassed by phone and online recently after an Internet manhunt mistakenly identified him as the man who attack torch bearer Jin Jing in Paris.

The attack on the disabled athlete on April 7 created a wave of protest in China after media exposure. Incensed netizens started an online campaign – the human search engine – mobilize the Internet population to track down specific individual and facts about him.

The netizens posted the picture of the man who attacked Jin Jing on Chinese Web sites, calling on the overseas Chinese community to help track him down. A few days later, the attacker's name, address, phone number and even a map of his neighborhood were posted on some Chinese Web sites.

However, the "attacker" was later confirmed by KSL, a local media outlet, as the wrong man. He had the same name Lobsang Gendun. This wrongly-accused man, a soft-spoken father of two, was travelling in San Francisco on the day of

the incident, the report said.

Similarly, the human search engine played a role in a situation where a half-naked woman was suspected of being dropped from a balcony by three foreigners in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, on April 5. Within a few days, the online campaign identified the girl as a model and actress named Tan Jing, and the suspects were three Koreans.

Though the police report denied Tan's death was related to the Koreans, the online campaign caused great embarrassment for the Koreans in Guangzhou.

The human search engine first appeared in the Mop forum, a Chinese Web site similar to Fark or chan, in 2001 when netizens were irritated by an online video showing a man abusing a cat and voluntarily went after and exposed information on him.

However, the morality of the human flesh search engine was questioned by some experts who claimed the engine was a privacy violation, or rather, another kind of online violence.

Comment

Chivalry is not dead

The human search is a spontaneous choice of netizens. As a whole, it reflects their pursuit of justice, which is much better than someone ignoring it. This is an extension of chivalry.

Though there is an opaque procedure during spontaneous behavior which sometimes causes privacy violation but it can be an effective supervision tool for society.

– Li Bian, scholar

Dangerous online world

The online world is unreal. Some act on suspicions, some collect hearsay and rumors and some good-hearted people react unwisely to the wrong information. So who is responsible for verifying the accuracy of information and speculation? There are possibilities in this unreal world that may lead to wrong-

ing an innocent person.

– Jeff Hopkins, US teacher

Establish some rules

As long as there are search engines on the Internet, there will be phenomena like the human search engine appearing. The key factor is how to establish the rules of the game, which require netizens to be more disciplined and organized.

– Jiang Qiping, IT expert

Job for the police

It does not matter if the suspect is guilty or not, should his information be published? I oppose the use of the human search engine to expose the private details of others and then intercede with violence. I suggest leaving these cases to the police. This is their job.

– Tom Lee, manager

Brighten city on government's tab

By Zhang Dongya

In a recent-release of regulations on neon lights and illuminations at night in Zhengzhou, Henan Province, the municipal government encouraged the units and shops along numerous streets to attach ammeters to their lights to measure the electricity, which would be subsidized by the municipal government.

As the city became brighter and more beautiful, problems of light pollution and excess energy use worried citizens.

Last month, Zhao Jiancai, mayor of Zhengzhou, investigated the city's night scene. Two trademark buildings of the new Zhengdong District of Zhengzhou International Center and Henan Art Center were not turned on that night resulting in pitch-black. Zhao requested fixing problems of the new buildings and restoring the incomplete neon lights and spotlights as soon as possible.

Shops began to fix the lights and collect the stipulated subsidy after the regulations were issued. The illumination project proceeded rapidly and the city turned very bright practically eliminating night.

"It is much more beautiful now," many citizens said. However, the spar-

ling neon lights and bright spotlights caused problems for residents wanting to get some sleep. "It is too dazzling and distracting," a resident surnamed Li said, "I got no sleep recently because of the lights on the surrounding tall buildings. The spotlights shone intermittently through my window every five minutes the whole night."

Besides light pollution, too much electricity consumption has also worried citizens. Since the project began in 2002, there have been more than 1,100 buildings along the streets using illumination, with 130,000 LED lights and 340,000 meters of contour lights, which consume massive amounts of energy.

The governors have considered the impact of the project on citizens, Jiao Hezhong, an official from the Zhengzhou Municipal Administration Bureau said. In order to decrease light pollution, the government required shops to choose weaker lights and reduce the brightness by adjusting the voltage at midnight. "We have considered using energy-saving lights in Mexico," Jiao said. "At the peak time of electricity consumption, some of the lights will be closed temporarily to ensure the adequacy of electricity for industry and residents."



Zhengzhou government's brightening the city program was criticized as an energy waste.

CFP Photo

Comment

Limit the lights

As a provincial capital city hosting important conventions, Zhengzhou should be bright and beautiful. However, the government should set up plans to control the illuminated areas regarding time and colors in advance to avoid too much light in living areas.

– Wang Jianguo, president of the Institute of Economics Research in Henan Academy of Social Sciences

Separate the two

It is understandable for the govern-

ment to subsidize electrical cost, but it is better to differentiate the public buildings and commercial shops. The source of subsidy should be made public, and where it goes.

– Song Yu, lawyer in Zhengzhou

Power to the people

I agree to brighten up the city, but not the "achievement project." I think the government should consider the citizens most, since citizens' smiling faces are the best urban business cards.

– Li Ming, Official in Zhengzhou



Paul Coleman CFP Photo

By Han Manman

Two years ago, "earth walker" Paul Coleman came to China for a three-month Earth Day Friendship Walk through Beijing, Seoul and Tokyo. At that time, he vowed to return to China in 2008 and help the country to achieve a green

UK earth walker

"Green Olympics" promotion tour from Hong Kong to Beijing

Olympics. Two years later, he has come back to fulfill his promise.

Brit Paul Coleman, 54, is on a 10-month walk from Hong Kong to Beijing to promote the concept of a "Green Olympics" along with his Japanese wife, Konomi.

He still wears a red scarf with a symbol on it. The only difference now is that the scarf is old and the color is faded. Coleman said the character in Japanese means "endless power," and in Chinese it means "money" to show he needs support.

"By doing this people will recognize me easily. Then they will be eager to know what I am doing and I can then tell them about my mission," Paul said.

After walking in Inner Mongolia last week, Paul and Konomi, are on their way to Nanjing. He said since China is promoting the concept of a "Green Olympics," the games provide him a good opportunity to spread his environmental message.

"I was invited to help participate in the 'Green Olympics.' The best way I can help is to walk. That means I will spend almost a year here. During the walk I can talk to people and spread the 'Green Olympics' message to millions of people."

"China is really big and the government cannot cover all areas. If a problem happens, the first thing is to let everybody

know about it. I think this is half-way to solving the problem," Paul said. "My duty is to help people to have a deep understanding about environmental protection and raise their will to make the change." He said Beijing citizens have a better sense of environmental protection than their rural neighbors, but they need to put their words into action.

Coleman felt tired during the walk, but never lonely. He receives a warm welcome wherever he goes, and he was surprised to find that some people follow him, walking for days or even longer, like the people in the movie *Forrest Gump* and he is really enjoying a journey filled

with interesting and unforgettable experiences, like being suspected of being a spy and being arrested six times within two days and nearly being killed in Sarajevo, and especially meeting his beautiful wife in Japan.

Paul Coleman took the first step in 1990 when he gave up a respectable job in Canada and began walking to South America. From that time on, he dedicated his life to preserving the environment. He has walked more than 46,000 kilometers through 39 countries on a mission to preserve Earth's natural environment and vowed to plant 100 million trees. He will arrive in Beijing in early August this year.

Sting's 'evil younger brother' to perform next month



Chris Botti, an American contemporary Jazz trumpeter, will perform in Beijing on his Italia tour. Photo provided by Def.ent

By He Jianwei

"Some people say, 'I live out of hotels,' but I really do live out of hotels. I have one bag, my trumpet, one band, my crew, a Yoga mat and that's it - no permanent residence anywhere," Chris Botti, 46, an American contemporary Jazz trumpeter, said on Monday night at his press conference for his Beijing gig.

Botti does not believe in owning a home or renting an apartment. He plays frequently around the world and the only place he calls home is the inside of a hotel room.

He will come to China on May 18 to the Forbidden City Concert Hall on his Italia tour. On September 25, 2007, Botti released his new album, *Italia*. The album focuses on Botti's Italian roots through such songs as Ave Maria, Venice, Estat, and the title track, *Italia*. In December 2007, it was nominated for the Grammy Award for Best Pop Instrumental Album.

Botti has also performed or

recorded with artists such as Sting, Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Chaka Khan, Andrea Bocelli, Jill Scott, Steven Tyler, The Blue Nile.

His first paid professional job was backing up Frank Sinatra, which might sound like an illustrious start to a career but his big break came when he met Sting.

"The most influential person in my music life is definitely Sting, who called me his evil younger brother," he said.

The collaboration on each other's albums in the late 1990s was the beginning of their friendship. Botti said their friendship is not only the understanding of jazz, but how to make the instrument popular.

"It's a very tricky thing, because a lot of jazz musicians just want to play a little jazz and they don't care about being popular. Sting understands both of those things and really helped me translate my trumpet album," he said.

While Botti was touring through

Europe with Sting, the song, "When I Fall In Love" fell into the hands of Oprah Winfrey, who quickly became a fan. Following an appearance on her television show in November of 2004, Botti's life changed overnight. "Sting set the table for me and then Oprah came along and opened the floodgates to people who may have never listened to jazz," he said.

Within a week of his performance he had sold more than 50,000 CD's and has not stopped since, maintaining it's top five presence on the charts all the while.

In the same year, Botti was named one of People Magazine's 50 Most Beautiful People. He performed at the 2005 Victoria's Secret Fashion Show, opening the show.

For his Beijing performance, the repertoire will include movie theme music such as *Cinema Paradiso*, *Sleepless In Seattle*, *Once Upon a Time in America*, *My Best Friend's Wedding*, as well as many jazz standards.

Greek director's triumphant return

By Gan Tian

As the opening show of Meeting in Beijing, Greetings from Athens and the Olympics will invite both Greek and Chinese artists to perform on the same stage on June 23. The show's Greek director, Lambros Liavas, visited the city this week.

Arriving in Beijing on Monday, Liavas paid a visit to the Great Hall of the People, where the show is going to be staged. "It was a technical visit to test the stage, the equipment and other things," he said, "but the place is full of memories." The next day he went to the National Center of Performing Arts, which impressed him with its dignified architectures.

The 49-year-old was in Beijing in 1999. "It was almost 10 years ago, and today I saw a lot of changes as a result of the Olympics. I noticed the airport the moment I arrived. It's an architecture combining both modern and traditional," he said. He said most buildings in the city are "with more personality." "Many buildings in big cities are almost the same,

but here, you can see the architects have devoted their hearts and souls into their designs, so each one is special," he said.

"Greetings from Athens and Olympics," will present a show on Greek and Chinese folk music and dances from the past 2,500 years, and a lighting ceremony of the Olympic flame in Greece. Liavas found some similarities between the two countries.

"Greece and China are both the orients of the world. At that moment, China was the gate to the east and Greece the west, so there must be something in common between the two countries," he said.

Liavas only used five keys in the show's music, which was the ancient style of performing in China and Greece. Artemis Ignatious, the choreography of the show, accompanied Liavas. Ignatious is also the choreography of the flame-lighting ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Olympics and she was the high priestess 20 years ago at the 1988 Olympics. "It will be exciting to see both Greek and Chinese musicians on the stage together," she said.



A scene from the show Greetings from Athens and Olympics. Photo provided by CPAA

Survey of expat's favorite housing survey begins

By Han Manman

As an expat living in China, are you satisfied with your living environment? The first annual "Expat Favorite Community and Star Communities in Beijing" survey, jointly launched by the Real Estate Media Group (REMG), *Beijing This Month*, *Urbane* and the Beijing Foreign Cultural Exchanges Center started recently.

The survey, which lasts until June, urges Beijing's residential real estate development groups to raise their standards up to the international level and collect international opinions. Expats in Beijing are welcomed to join the voting

campaign to choose their favorite residential communities in Beijing based on construction quality, facility, convenience and property management.

Yin Sufeng, vice general manager of REMG said he is looking forward to hearing expat's opinions on residential spaces and preferences. Survey feedback will help them comprehensively evaluate what kind of improvements Beijing needs for its residential spaces and community environment.

The final result will be announced after the survey.

To vote, house.focus.cn/ztdir/2008pinglou/ or call 6441 0689



Nanhuoguxiang is regarded as one of the good residential areas.

Photo by Zhang Kaixin

UCLES wants to further relationship with China

By Jackie Zhang

For many years, various English language tests have been popular in China for students headed abroad. The University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES) entered China with its English language tests including IELTS, BEC, and BULATS in 1992. On Tuesday, UCLES celebrated its 150th birthday, also its 15th anniversary in China, at the Great Hall of the People.

Since UCLES came to China 15 years ago, its English language tests have been popular among Chinese English learners. The syndicate has also had many collaborations with government departments and Chinese educational organizations.

"UCLES has a close collaborative relationship with the National Education Examinations Authority of China, which has successfully endured for 20 years. We attach great importance to our relationship and are looking for further collaboration in more fields," Simon Lebus, group chief executive of UCLES, said Tuesday.

The organization has several English language test products. For the coming Olympic Games, it cooperated with Beijing's governmental departments and launched the Beijing English Testing System (BETS).

"The test is specially-designed for Beijing citizens hoping to improve their English levels before the Olympics. Thousands



Cambridge representatives

Photo by Zhang Nan

of people have sat the test, but we don't have new language test products for the Olympics this year," Michael Milanovic, chief executive of English for Speakers of Other Language (ESOL), a branch of UCLES, said. "Our cooperation is not limited to Olympic Games. It is a start. It is not easy to predict what will happen in the future. But we're sure we'll provide more support and help."

Besides learning the English language, Lebus and Milanovic also shared their opinion on the interest in learning Chinese all over the world.

"People have great interest in learning Chinese worldwide at present," Lebus said. "In 1923, Cambridge University set up Chinese language learning courses in order to meet students' needs for Chinese language certificates. Now, people's interest in Chinese is increasing. In many countries including the UK, New Zealand and Germany, there are Confucius Institutes. Many students at school are studying Chinese. My 11-year-old son takes part in a Chinese learning club at school now."

Event

Cookery: hand-pulled noodles and dumplings

Longevity noodles, different from the Shaanxi style thick and elastic ones, are created for birthdays, especially for the elderly. Then try making two types of dumplings with different fillings and flavors, and enjoy this typical Chinese food after steaming and boiling.

Where: Chinese Culture Club, Kent Center, No 29 Anjialou, Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: April 26, 4-6:30 pm

Cost: 120 yuan

Tel: 6432 9341

Modern Dance: S

The Scarecrow Contemporary Dance Company from Taiwan Province will perform "S," combined with daily behaviors, theatrical performances and surrealistic ideas, which is a life-themed choreography showing our questions and thoughts on life. The theme of the choreography *S* originated from a sentence from Thoreau's masterpiece *Walden Pond*, addressing the meaning of "What kind of space separates man from his kind and makes him solitary?"

Where: TNT Theater, Chaoyang Culture Center, 17, Jintai Xi Lu, Chaoyang District

When: May 8 to 11

Cost: 300, 200, 180, 120, 100 and 60 yuan

Tel: 6417 7845

Beijing Cricket Club

Beijing hosts Shanghai in the latest installment of this biannual grudge match. BBQ and drinks will be available and all families and friends are welcome.

Where: Dulwich College Beijing, 1 Xiangjiang Bei Lu, Jingshun Lu, Chao Yang District

When: April 27, 10:30 am

Tel: 8450 7676

(By He Jianwei)

7

Debate

Peking Opera goes back to school



Rewards for relinquishing seats



Two kidney transplants rejected by regulations



Transformer substation breeds controversy



Eastern and western viewpoints meet here



洋腔论见

文化差异的碰撞与融合

Film shoot paralyzes city



Transformer substation breeds controversy



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7

Debate

Cheap prices to attend the first Beijing International Dance Festival



A German dance company will express the language of Dance Theatre through drama and dance.

Photo provided by LDTX

By He Jianwei

To attract a bigger audience, the first Beijing International Dance Festival will offer all tickets to its modern dance performances at a price of 50 and 580 yuan for ballet performances, the organizer of the festival said.

The first Beijing International Dance Festival will present the performances from May 9 to 25 on the stage of the Tianqiao Theater. The dance festival marks the first annual event held to

inspire local dance companies and promote international cultural exchange.

"Currently the price of performances in Beijing is much too high – most people cannot afford to buy tickets. We decided to set a fair price to encourage people who are interested in coming to attend and participate in the event," Willy Tsao, the founder and artistic director of Hong Kong City Contemporary Dance Company (CCDC) and Beijing

LDTX Modern Dance Company (LDTX) and the manager of Guangdong Modern Dance Company (GMDC), said.

The festival features a broad range of both China-based companies, including LDTX, CCDC, GMDC and the National Ballet of China (NBC), and international companies, including the Battery Dance Company from the US and the Tanztheater Staatstheater Braunschweig from Germany.

CCDC's choreographer Helen

Lai will present her latest work, *HerStory* on the first night. *HerStory* is a dance based on Nushu, literally "female writing," which is a unique written language developed and used exclusively over generations by women in the Jiangyong county, Hunan Province.

The US's Battery Dance Company has represented the US overseas in more than 30 countries and has developed cultural exchange programs in the realm of dance and the performing

arts. It will perform three pieces of dance choreographed by its founder Jonathan Hollander.

The Tancetheatre Staatstheater Braunschweig will give the audience the language of Dance Theater, which is capable of fully expressing all phases of the drama and dance.

From May 23 to 25, the NBC will perform three pieces of ballet, which is the result of the cultural exchange between China and France.

X10 Thinking seminar next Monday

By Annie Wei

ClarkMorgan, a training firm, founded in 2001 by Andy Clark and Morry Morgan, has grown to be the biggest corporate training company in the Chinese mainland and Hong Kong with 70 full-time staff in eight cities.

Michael Hewitt-Gleason, a leading professional in the field, was invited by the firm, to give an exclusive one-day seminar on "X10 Thinking" on Monday, April 28 at the Swissotel.

Hewitt-Gleason said when he consulted business leaders worldwide he always asked the same question, "What kept you awake last night?"

Business leaders commonly responded with the same answer – pressure to meet targets, managing the work-life balance and recruitment and retention issues. The interesting fact about these problems is that they are not new. Solutions are readily available and managers all over the world have already solved these problems.

Unfortunately, many people cannot see the answers and remain

stuck in circular mentalities – their thinking goes round and round without ever reaching a solution. This is where the need for thinking skills comes in, he said.

There are many ways to develop thinking skills. One very useful skill Hewitt-Gleason has devised is called "X10 thinking." For 25 years, he has been advising business leaders and their employees on how to use X10 thinking. Employing this innovative approach, he has assisted a wide range of enterprises, from 70,000 New York City hospital employees to major US corporations like GE.

X10 is a type of brain software designed to add value to business decisions by multiplying things by 10. Anyone can use it, anywhere and at anytime – in science, business, and life. X10 thinking allows one to escape entrenched thinking patterns and become part of his corporate culture from senior management to lower-level employees. Here are some ways one can use this technique in his or her daily work. "Give 10 times more gifts to clients this week than last week.

Consult 10 colleagues for their opinion on a matter of importance. Search 10 Web sites that you have never visited before," Hewitt-Gleason said.

In the business world, Jack Welch of General Electric was the most famous advocate of X10 thinking. He used X19 thinking at GE to help him change the culture of a 100-year-old manufacturer making it, at the time of his departure, the most valuable company in the history of the world!

"GE invited me to join the management team soon after Welch became the chairman and CEO. He wrote to me saying, 'I would love to have a management team that really understands the X10 equation and its role in the management process.' So in the 1980s, I spent several years installing the X10 thinking brain software at GE. Welch later wrote 'X10 thinking can make each of us wake up with the goal of Finding a Better Way Every Day.' Jack also used X10 thinking in crisis management situations, such as one very serious occasion



Michael Hewitt-Gleason

Photo provided by ClarkMorgan

involving a situation between GE and US President Ronald Reagan's Defense Secretary, Casper Weinberger. Jack asked me to meet with him privately in Manhattan, to apply X10 thinking to find a solution," Hewitt-Gleason said.

For tickets and further information on the seminar about "X10 Thinking" on Monday, April 28 at Swissotel, email: naomi.saunders@clarkmorgan.com

ASK Beijing Today

Email your questions to: weiyang@ynet.com

I just moved in to a 7-year-old apartment and detected a very pungent smell from the washroom. I tried to get rid of it using different products as well as electric fans and checked to see if, possibly, there was evidence of a dead mouse or cockroaches. Nothing has worked. The smell lingers. Any suggestions?

It happens a lot in many old buildings. The easiest solution is to use a plastic bag to cover the sewage hole. Also, do not turn on electronic fans for a long time because normally the ventilation sucks the odor out of the sewage holes. If these methods do not work, talk to your landlord or ask the property management team to check it out.

I'm considering moving into a courtyard, but I've heard that heating one through electric heaters is extremely expensive. Do you know a ballpark figure on how much it costs?

The heating season starts from November 15 to March 15, four months in total. From a friend's experience living in a 200-square-meter hutong house, she paid a monthly electric bill totaling 2,000 yuan.

(By Wei Ying)

The Forbidden City's digital guide

By Jackie Zhang

The Forbidden City recently installed 16 touch panels in order to provide visitors with an automatic guide and consultancy service.

The touch panels are installed on both sides of the Hall of

Supreme Harmony and the Hall of Preserved Harmony. There are some special columns on the screen including a digital guide of the Forbidden City, treasures in the Forbidden City and the Forbidden City's repair.

The digital guide of the Forbidden City provides visitors a touring routes service. The columns about treasures in the Forbidden City introduce 20 precious collections in the Palace Museum.

The special panels can also help tourists search for information about the Forbidden City. It is a part of the Palace Museum's service plan which is to build a digital platform for tourists.

MIDI



By He Jianwei

Midi Music Festival 2008, China's largest outdoor music festival capsuling music forms from rock, hip-hop, to folk and experimental, has invited 100 bands from China and 30 bands from abroad to perform on seven stages from May 1 to 4 in Haidian Park.

On the rock stages, the big names include X.T.X and Cold Blooded Animal, whose lead vocalist is Xie Tianxiao, regarded as the new rock godfather in China, Mando Diao, a Swedish rock band, who performed last year at Beijing's Pop Festival, and Hardcore Superstar, also from Sweden, who opened up for the legendary Aerosmith at the Sweden Rock Festival.

Compared with the last year's MIDI Music Festival, the organizers have set up a new stage for folk music fans, the Mini MIDI Stage will be in Haidian Park first time and the audiences can camp in the designated areas by the Beijing MIDI School of Music.

Folk stage: a first-time platform for folk artists

Folk stage is a new comer to this year's festival. As many as 40 artists or bands from five countries will take the stage, including big names in China's folk music like Lao Lang, Wan Xiaoli, Zhao Yiran and Wang Juan. Foreign artists or bands include two from Australia, one from the UK, one from France and one from Canada.

Jane Germain, from Australia, will perform on the third night. She appeared on the music scene in the 1990s, with the acclaimed debut album, *The Honeymoon's Over*, and the album,



render in the following year

Listeners were introduced to the Aussie songwriter, born under but of Chinese heritage, who brought a self-styled fancy to the diverse music she performed combining blues, funk and anything else that seemed expressive and alive. Songs she wrote and sang were about feelings old and new, the music was as inventively rhythmic as it was melodic.

A two-girl band, the Hussy Hicks, also from Australia, will perform on the last night. The girls, Julz Parker and Leesa Gentz, met in 2004 and developed a musical chemistry that has taken them on a rollercoaster journey – performing on every continent, from intimate coffeehouse circuit of the US to major festivals including Glastonbury, UK; The Plateau Festival, New Jersey, US and the 10th International Guitar Festival in Italy.

The Hussy Hicks music is flavored with a unique mix of influences and the girls present their songs in a very tongue-in-cheek, beautifully musical way, each supporting the other in their differently different styles.

Mini MIDI 2008: experimental music outside the park

The Mini MIDI, first took place in 2005 and is the experimental stage of the MIDI Music Festival. It presents a wide variety of adventurous modern music including experimental,

avant-garde, improvised, electronic, noise and sonic art. 2008 is its fourth year, and the Mini MIDI will take place from May 1 to 3 at the Drive-in Movie Theater on the grassland in front of the 2 Kolegas Bar. The bar is home of the experimental music label Waterland Kwanyin, which is the first open platform for experimental, improvisational musicians and sound artists who live in or travel around Beijing.

Admission is free. The program includes conversation, outdoor performances and an electronic music party. It is not only a meeting of artists and audience, but also a party of critics, indie labels and institutions.

Although the number of outdoor artists is fewer than usual, the casual outdoor atmosphere and unrestricted noise is lasting. Andy Guhl, from Switzerland, the first confirmed foreign artist, a member of Voice Crack, is the hero of the international underground and noise scene. "Zero and Sound," the first generation noise project in Taiwan, will appear at the Mini MIDI Festival for the first time after a ten-year absence.

On the afternoon of May 1, Miguel Santos, head of the Atlantic Waves Music Festival, will present the history and operations of the Festival providing the guests with videos and a free CD. The aim of this exchange with the Chinese artists is to bring an international perspective to the current China independent/experimental music organizations. A selection of Chinese artists

will participate in the Atlantic Waves Festival this year.

The two-night indoor performances feature special performances of artists from the Shanshui label and Staubgold label, including electronic music, DJing and party.

The New Music China Archive will set up mobile exhibitions at the Mini MIDI Festival for the first time. Sugar Jar and other independent organizations will hold exhibitions dedicated to promote their productions.

Musical campground

The camping area will open at 9 am April 30 and close at 2 pm May 5 in MIDI School. At 11 am on May 1, a morning call service will wake you up at the camp ground area and inform you about the bus departing for the festival area. Camping is only allowed in the camping areas defined by the MIDI Music Festival in the Beijing MIDI School of Music and each camping area is divided into spaces. The camping area staff will help visitors maintain the order and position of the camping spaces and take out the garbage.

Camping (overnight) in festival areas is prohibited. All festival-goers will be cleared out each evening when Haidian Park closes the gates at around 10 pm. Visitors are not allowed to stay overnight within the festival area. The school does not charge campers any fees and, of course, does not provide any camping accessories.



Tickets

Two types of tickets are available from May 1 to 4 at Haidian Park's main gate, a One-day Ticket, 50 yuan for each day, and an All-Day Ticket, 150 yuan for four days. This year's MIDI Music Festival will not have student tickets or group tickets. It would be wise to buy the four-day ticket as early as possible, because it was sold out last year by late afternoon on the first day. On May 1 noon, Haidian Park will open its gates for festival visitors. Your ticket is valid both for Haidian Park and all the festival areas.

Venues

Haidian Park

2 Xinjiangongmen Lu, Haidian District

Beginning at 8 am on May 1 till 12 pm on May 4, no cars are allowed inside Haidian Park except for vehicles explicitly allowed by the MIDI Music Festival organizers. It is best to take public transportation to the park. Getting there by bus, you can take any of the following: 302, 904, 933, 973, 362, 38, 817, 725, 708, 992, 996 and Yuntong 108 to the Furongli station. Or you can take the 740, 735, 835, 751, 982 and 983 to the Haidian Qiao station.

2 Kolegas Bar (Liang ge hao peng you)

21 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

2 Kolegas is located inside the Maple Drive-In movie theater complex, which is across the street from Chaoyang Park's north gate. From Lufthansa Center (Yan Sha), go half a kilometer east, and keep your eye out for the neon Maple Drive-In sign on the North side of the road.

Midi School

Jia 12, Ruiwangfen, Haidian District

You can take bus 714 (from Fuchengmen station), 733 (from Gongzhufen station), 360 (Dongwuyuan station) and get off at Ruiwangfen Station.

For more information, please go to the official website, which has an English version: **midimidi**

Bad luck is something you inherit

Junot Diaz's new book, *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (352pp, Riverhead Hardcover, US \$14.97), took the National Book Critics Circle Award in March and just grabbed a Pulitzer earlier this month. The story is funny and street smart and written in a brand of Spanglish that remains accessible to monolingual English speakers.

The book describes a multi-generational family curse that leaves each generation to struggle with trouble and tragedy.

Rather than pick the typical inner-city chick-magnet Latino as his outlet, Diaz turns to a hero less common: "Oscar Wao," a fat, dorky Latino science fiction writer bent on becoming the "Dominican Tolkien" and with enough self hatred to stun even the emo crowd.

He fears gym class, uses big words, pines for girls who are out of his league and ponders suicide. Even his friends' best efforts to shape him up and drag him kicking and screaming into

society are met with disinterest.

But the story hardly focuses on Oscar alone. Much time is spent developing his sister Lola and mother Beli. His mother is a tough woman who grew up in the kind of torturous childhood environment that only a family on the wrong side of an all-powerful dictator can know. All her family members are murdered by thugs or killed under strange circumstances, and she herself is beaten brutally after an affair with a man married to Dominican dictator Trujillo's sister.

The story is an exploration of the heritage that begot Oscar, and how the last 500 years of bad luck shaped his destiny.

Diaz is hardly a new writer, though this book marks his debut as a novelist. *Drown*, his collection of short stories published in 1996, was well received by critics. He moved to the US at age six to settle in New Jersey with his parents. His writings reflect the immigrant experience.

(By Derrick Sobodash)



The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao

A Novel

Junot Díaz

Author of *Drown*

Experimental theater on words

By Gan Tian

Local playwright Liao Yimei recently published two works: the scripts of plays *Rhinoceros in Love* and *Amber* (Lian'ai de Xiniu, Hupo, 201pp, Xin Xing Publishing House, 20 yuan) and the second edition of her novel of five years ago, *Pessimist's Bouquet* (Beishang-zhuyide Huaduo, 228pp, The Writer's Publishing House, 18 yuan).

Liao's husband and work partner Meng Jinghui is one of China's most acclaimed young theater directors. Heavily inspired by Meyerhold's theories of acting technique and theater as revolution, Meng has staged several experimental adaptations of foreign works including Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, Genet's *The Balcony*, Fo's *The Accidental Death of an Anarchist* and Mayakovsky's *The Bedbug*, and has also directed several plays written by his wife Liao.

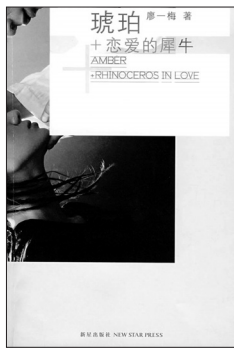
Rhinoceros in Love was first staged in 1999. The play follows Malu, a rhinoceros-raiser who falls desperately in love with Mingming, a

secretary who rejects him in the end. The simple story features "singing, satire, a drooping clock-shaped card table, a huge eye, a famous guitar-playing, love-song-crooning actor, and the next, Audrey Hepburn jumping rope while she rejects a man's honest, stubborn, no-holds barred love at the end of the world," one of the play's fans said.

Amber is about a heart-transplant that leads Shen Xiaoyun, a museum tour guide, and Gao Yuan to meet. Shen's fiancé dies in a car accident and his heart is transplanted to Gao, a playboy. Shen watches Gao closely and the two fall in love.

The two plays, though similar to old fairy tales, were playful, entertaining and highly improvisational productions. Liao, the experimental playwright, successfully painted a portrait of the country's 30-somethings: caught between communist ideals and the rising tide of capitalism. Liao said *Amber* is "full of life and love" and she believed this is what has made it one of the best Chinese theatrical productions since it premiered at the Hong Kong Arts Festival in March 2005.

Liao's literary career includes several plays and films and more than 50 television screenplays.



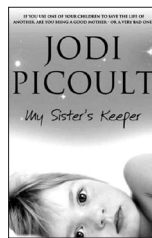
CNPIEC Bookstore book listing

The China National Publication Import and Export Corporation's (CNPIEC) bookstore recommends the following new arrivals to *Beijing Today* readers.

My Sister's Keeper

By Jodi Picoult, 422 pp, Coronet Books, 90 yuan

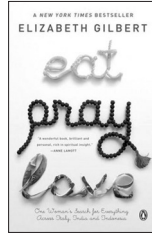
Anna is not sick, but she might as well be. By age 13, she has undergone countless surgeries, transfusions and shots so that her sister Kate can fight leukemia. Anna was born for this purpose, her parents tell her, which is why they love her even more. But she has reached an age of physical awareness and so has made a decision too difficult to bear. She has decided to sue her parents for the rights to her own body.



Eat, Pray, Love

By Elizabeth Gilbert, 352 pp, Penguin Books, 120 yuan

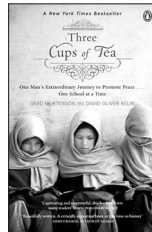
Elizabeth Gilbert tells how she made the difficult choice to leave behind all the trappings of modern American success – marriage, a house in the country and a career – and find what she wanted from life. Setting out for a year to study three different aspects of her nature amid three different cultures, Gilbert explored the art of pleasure in Italy and the art of devotion in India, and then a balance between the two on the Indonesian island of Bali.



Three Cups of Tea

By Greg Mortenson, 368 pp, Penguin Books Ltd, 120 yuan

Greg Mortenson, a homeless mountaineer who followed a climb up Pakistan's treacherous K2, was inspired by a chance encounter with impoverished mountain villagers and promised to build them a school. Over the next decade he built 55 schools – especially for girls – that offered a balanced education in one of the most isolated and dangerous regions on Earth.



CNPIEC Bookstore

Where: the second floor of CNPIEC, 16 Gongti Dong Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 8:30 am – 6:30 pm

Tel: 6500 1859, 6592 6871

(By Zhang Dongya)

Finding a touch of originality

A handmade portrait book waiting to be mailed.

By Zhang Dongya

The assembly line dominates world production. Most things are made according to a set design and come out identical. Hand-made items are increasingly rare and costly – the price for the artist's time and originality. *Beijing Today* talked with three artists about their handmade books. A new handmade portraits relay started recently. One photographer made her own handmade portrait book and another artist has produced handmade magazines since 2005.

Handmade Portraits Book, a relay among photographers

Memo (Lin Shu), 27, an Urban China Magazine photographer, founded the drifting handmade portraits campaign in 2006. He invited photographers from all over the country to make a handmade portrait book. Memo mailed and passed the book between photographers like a relay. "I wanted it to be distributed this way to keep the book constantly in circulation," Memo said.

The handmade portraits book has two volumes: one on white backing and one on black. The photographers can choose either to use as the background of their work.

Photographers were required to finish their works by adding graffiti, paste and similar decorations within five days. When completed, the book would be mailed to the next appointed photographer. The only cost in the relay was the EMS charge paid by each photographer. Each artist was allowed to revise and reproduce any other photographers work, except where it was marked as "forbidden."

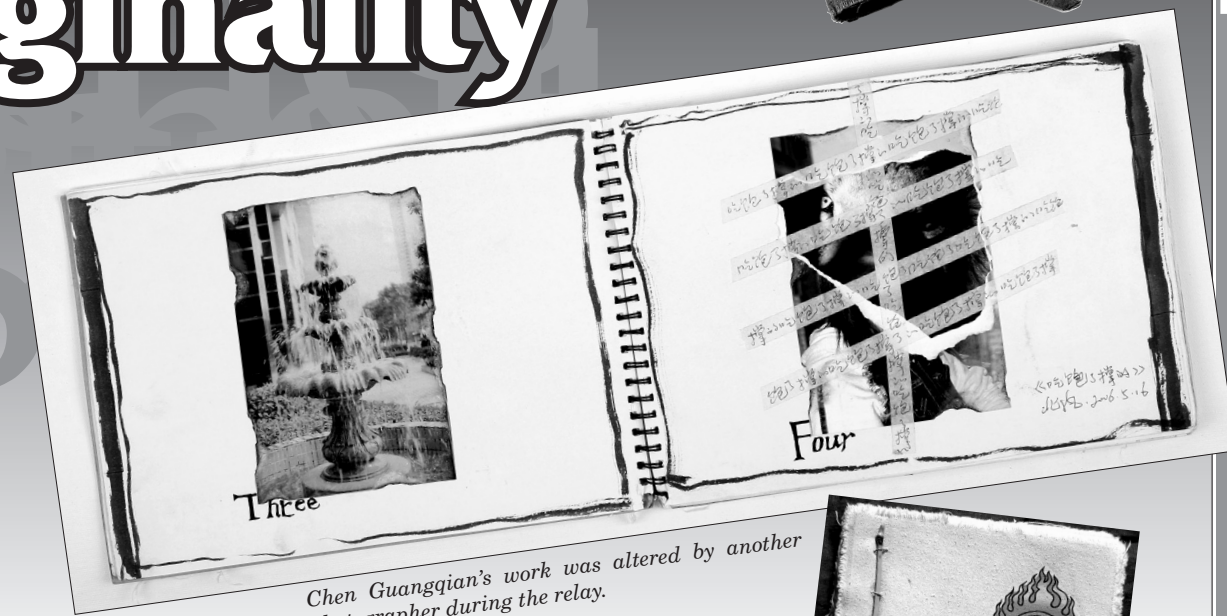
After two years in circulation, the first round ended last year. More than 20 photographers and painters took part in this campaign and submitted their works.

New photographers and artists are invited to participate in the second relay this year. There will be another three volumes. "I hope all the books will be published and exhibited in the future," Memo said.

"Some unexpected things happened during the handicraft relay," Memo said.

"CVC," a photographer, was the only one who used the word "forbidden" on his work. Chen Guangqian's work was remade most by Beifeng, who pasted an animal's pate onto a girl's head and wrote the saying "eating too much," an idiomatic phrase that means "Stop dawdling and find something to do."

"The most important thing is that they have fun – it does not matter if they are professional artists or not," Memo said.



Chen Guangqian's work was altered by another photographer during the relay.

A Bloody Aria, a handmade portrait book

Yiki (Liu Yiqing), 26, a "new generation" photographer in China, published *A Bloody Aria* this January, her handmade portrait book which was named after a Korean movie. The book includes 27 black-and-white photos and was designed, printed and bound all by Yiki and her friends. The final book is in a loose-leaf binder and is mixed with handmade elements, like overexposed film and prints.

"I prefer to show my photos in a more interesting way, like in this handmade book, rather than at an

exhibition," Yiki said.

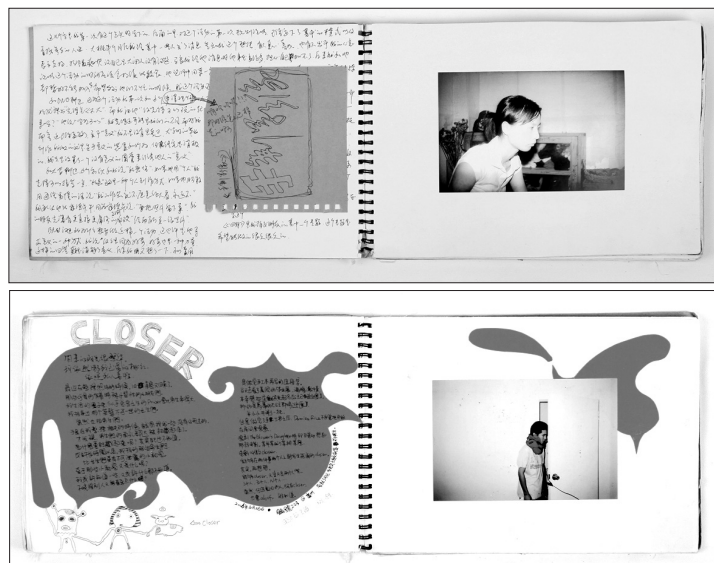
Yiki participated in Memo's relay, and was the last one in the first round. "I used to mix handmade elements into my works, including the foil wrappings from chocolates and gunny sack cloth," Yiki said. "This time, I used test film with my paintings."



Yuejing Magazine



Yuejing Magazine was exhibited in Get It Louder 2007.



Memo (upper) and No 223 attend the portraits book relay.

"Yuejing," a handmade magazine

"Yuejing Magazine is like a stage where all my friends and I can show off our imagination and talent," Qiao Xiaodao, 33, a handicraft artist, music producer and designer, said of his 2005 creation.

"The purpose of Yuejing is to record stories and monthly experiences," Qiao said. "Once, I tried to do a color print on paper for a Chinese painting. It was interesting, and inspired me to start making handicrafts in my studio."

The magazine is made in screen print and shows off work in canvas, plastic, sheet iron and wood. There have been more than 40 magazines printed since 2005, each with a unique size, page or form.

"We have different kinds of equipment and tools, like a printing press, bookbinding machine, screwdrivers and pliers. Sometimes, my room is like a handicraft workshop," Qiao said. "We make the magazine all by ourselves: we cut out cloth, set the plates, print and bind."

Qiao recorded all his and his friends' activities and events related to their art creations in poems, paintings, photos, also audio and video forms. Normally,

their magazine is distributed in mixed media. Once, Qiao painted an illustration, and his friend, a toy enthusiast, made a puppet out of cloth based on his illustration, and then they stitched the puppet into the magazine. In *Get It Louder 2007*, Qiao made six Yuejing Magazines out of canvas with identical size and form.

Qiao founded the Screen Print Studio in 2004. His studio began to make designs for others, like the inserts for musicians' CDs. All his work is rooted in handicraft and rough materials. "I can not scrap my saw, hammer or any other tool – each is a part of my style," Qiao said.

Photos provided by Memo and Qiaoxiaodao



Qiao Xiaodao at his studio.

By Gan Tian

Most people choose a dog or a cat as a pet, but what if you want a lizard? Or a spider? If you are wondering where to get one, try the Guanyuan Pets Market. Though it is not an officially authorized pet market, it still has a good reputation among animal-lovers. *Beijing Today* gives some suggestions on finding the most exciting pets at this market.

A pet is the best bet



Lizard



A mouse

Follow the birdcages

Guanyuan Pets Market is located between the Fuchengmen and Chegongzhuang Subway Stations on the loop line. It is somewhat difficult to find the market's exact address, as some vendors just gather in the street and do business there casually.

The best way to get there is to get off at Fuchengmen station and take the north exit. Walk about 100 meters and you will see, on the east side of the road, some old men walking with birdcages. Follow them and you will find the market at the end of the street.

Buses numbered 44, 618, 702, 21 and 604 will also take you there. Get off at Fuchengmen Bei station.

If traveling by taxi, tell the cab driver you want to go to the Guanyuan Market or *niaoshi* and show him a picture. Good luck.

You can check out the place between 6 am and 7 pm at your convenience. It closes earlier in winter at around 5 pm.

Leave the camera at home!

Bokononist, a US netizen visited the market several years ago and had some important advice for visitors.

Don't take pictures at this market, no matter how fantastic the sights are. When I snapped a picture without a flash and was spotted, I was screamed at by everyone in the vicinity. You will already stand out as a foreigner, so do not draw any extra attention to yourself by snapping photos. That made them really angry.



Grasshopper

Fish, flies, feathers and ferns

The Beijing Guanyuan Pets Market is also called The Fish, Bird and Insect Market. When a visitor enters, the first thing to tickle your ear drums is the wonderful sound of singing birds. It would be so nice to hear such colorful melodies in the second ring road or city's downtown area, so everyone would be tempted to explore this market.

Having a pet is a popular pastime in China – many an old man whiles away the hours teaching his birds to say “Ni hao,” and almost everyone has had a pet katydid at some point. This market is where local people come to indulge their hobbies.

The Guanyuan Market sells all kinds of plants and animals,

from crickets to rare breeds of cats. In China, cats with one blue eye and one brown eye are especially treasured and you'll see lots of pet birds in the morning dreaming of freedom at Tai Chi sessions.

There are some creatures at this market you would only expect to see at the zoo like snakes, lizards, spiders, insects, snails, tortoises, crabs and fish. Animal rights activists might be bugged by this, but for everyone else it is a really interesting experience.

There is also a cricket area, with stacks of bamboo cages filled with crickets chirping loud enough to deafen you! There are land tortoises ambling around, big iguanas and other lizards –



A rabbit in “pumpkin”

even a boa constrictor! Also in the house, green snakes, red snakes, strange-looking crabs, weird large snails, squirrels and a tarantula! Among the normal animals are many aquarium fish, frogs, chicks, ducklings, piglets, hamsters and rabbits. “I was fascinated by the market. If you love animals and getting close to odd ones, you should visit,” a foreign visitor said, “If you are an animal-rights activist, maybe you should visit a museum.”

Reasonable prices

Since you can find really strange and rare animals at the Guanyuan Market, the prices are a little high but not unreasonable.

For example, Siamese cats cost from 300 to 800 yuan, Russian Blues 500 to 1,000 yuan, Scottish folds under 1,000 yuan, Persians 300 yuan and common cats only 30 to 50 yuan. The market also stocks birds, fish and guinea pigs at cheap prices. Finally, you can buy dog and cat food and tearless shampoo for 30 to 50 yuan. Pet toys are also available.

Visit the Guanyuan Market. It will bring out the animal in you.



Mice



The market is hidden here

Photos by Issac Feng

Chilean wines



By Yang Wanli

The Chile Gourmet Festival, which started last Monday, ends tomorrow at the Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts. The festival is aimed at exposing local diners to Chilean flavor. Chilean chef Cristian Correa and his assistant were invited to the city to prepare dishes to capture the core of Chilean flavor.

Many delicious Chilean foods, like Traditional Beef Chilean Turnovers, Beef Cazuela and Papaya and Pisco Mousse, are available during the festival. It provided us a chance to learn more about Chilean food and wine, and the culture behind them.



Beef

Chilean cuisine stirs city

Various flavors of Chile

Chilean cuisine reflects the cultural evolution of a country in constant search for its ancestral identity. It is noted for its use of herbs and spices, great variety of fish, shellfish and meat dishes and a wide range of fresh food and vegetables.

Many diners said they were most impressed by Cancato, a salmon dish. The salmon is cut into small pieces and covered with sticky cheese and

bacon. It has a very fresh taste, and the mixture of Chilean cheese adds a soft but fantastic taste.

It is possible to find most of the ingredients for Chilean cooking in China, including fruits, salmon and avocados. Even if some ingredients are missing, it is still possible to make a Ceviche or seafood soup. Experienced cooks may rather tackle mas aempanadas, Humitas or Corn Cake.



Corn Cake

Wines beyond your budget

Chile's wines are as famous as its delicate food. The country produces fabulous Cabernet Sauvignons, Merlots, Pinot Noirs, Chardonnays and Sauvignon Blancs. Its finest wines balance ripe aromatic fruit with acidity.

Chilean wine is widely known for its young drinkability and remarkable value – most priced less than US \$20 per bottle – but as higher end Chilean wines gain notoriety, the price has climbed.

If you want to buy Chilean wine in Beijing, the most convenient way is to go to the imported product section of your nearest supermarket. Most imported wine in the supermarket is priced less than 200 yuan. Nearly all the five-star hotels, like Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts, Jing Guang New World Hotel and The Great Wall Sheraton Hotel Beijing, also provide guests with Chilean wine.

Wine shops would be the next choice. The capital has many special wine shops, and most are exclusive agencies. The underground wines shops in SOGO mostly sell wines produced by ASC, a Chilean wine giant. Fortune Centre is another good place to look. The staff can provide more professional service and recommendations than supermarket staff. You can sometimes sample wines before purchase.

Wines shops and products in Beijing

Brand: Inniskillin Gold Oak-Aged Vidal Icewine
Where: SOGO, 8 Xuanwumen Wai Dajie
Tel: 6310 0197
Price: 944 yuan per bottle
Brand: Jackson-Triggs Proprietors' Reserve
Where: Yansha Shopping Mal, 52 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District
Tel: 6465 1118 ext 433
Price: 660 yuan per bottle
Brand: Chateau Doisy-Vedrine, Grand Cru Classe
Where: ASC exclusive agencies, Donghuang Plaza, 29 Dongzhong Lu, Dongcheng District
Tel: 6418 1598
Price: 740 yuan per bottle

Ravintola piha



Make traditional Chilean food in your kitchen

If you want to prepare a traditional Chilean feast for your families, or just want to add a foreign dish to your own menu, then here are two simple recipes.

Fish and Cumin Skewers

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 clove garlic, chopped
1 tablespoon fresh coriander, chopped
2 teaspoons ground cumin
1 teaspoon ground pepper
750 grams white fillets in 2-centimeter cubes
1. In a bowl, mix the oil, garlic, coriander, cumin and pepper. Add the cubed fish and let stand over night.

2. Soak bamboo skewers in cold water for 20 minutes.

3. Thread the marinated fish pieces onto the bamboo skewers and place on an oiled oven tray. Cook under the oven grill, turning constantly for 5-6 minutes or till done. Remove from the oven and serve warm.

Serena Libre

Ice cubes
1/3 cup of Pisco
2/3 cup papaya juice
Fill a large tall glass with ice cubes, Pisco and papaya nectar. Stir and serve.

* All the raw materials can be purchased at the supermarket.



Beet salad with goat cheese and almonds



Cristian Correa

Correa's recommendations

Cristian Correa, a chef from Chile, and his gentle smile are the key figures in the gourmet festival.

Every dish was prepared by Correa. The chef had a brief interview with *Beijing Today* and showed his skill.

Beijing Today: Tell us about one or two of the dishes in this Chile gourmet festival that you think best represent Chilean food.

Cristian Correa: When talking about Chilean flavor, I think the Pastel de Choclo (Corn Cake) is a perfect example. It has elements of native American cooking like corn and basil mixed with beef, raisins and olives of the Azapa Valley. It has a perfect balance between the sweetness of the corn and other elements. The Empanada is another good example. It is a very soft, stuffed dough with beef, boiled eggs, olives and onion. It is a pleasant surprise in the mouth as the dough flakes apart to reveal a juicy center flavored with cumin.

BT: Which is the taste featured in the recently opened MESTIZO restaurant in Santiago, Chile?

C: MESTIZO is precisely what its name suggests, a mixture of all the tastes that are prevalent today. It is a mixture of aboriginal and Spanish tastes, of Peruvian and Chinese, of American, European and Asian. In every place in the world there has been, at some moment, a fort meztizaje between the original and the foreign, between the old and the new.

BT: How does Chilean food differ from the cuisine of other countries?

C: Every region and culture has a different custom, tradition, taste and flavor. In Chile, we use powerful and pronounced flavors with spices ... emphasize noble raw produce like the corn, the tomato, the quinoa and the many fish and sea life that we have on our long coast. Chinese tastes focus on intense flavors that balance out against each other.

BT: How do like Chinese food, especially Beijing dishes?

C: I have had many spicy dishes, soups, duck, baozi, cow stomach, but in truth I do not know what is traditional. I ate something cooked with spicy sauce in a restaurant. I loved it, especially how it was balanced out by rice.

Photos by Yang Wanli

Spa

Nightlife

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Forever in blue jeans

By Gan Tian

Blue jeans are the staple of every wardrobe. When summer approaches or even in winter, most of us cannot wait to pull on those denim darlings. But did you know that they can be dangerous? *Beijing Today* reveals some secret blue jean health tips, and wishes your legs lots of luck.

Drink and denim do not mix

Here is an interesting story on jeans health from "Stuffed," a New Zealand site that, like The Onion, teases readers with fake news stories. The piece, which seems almost plausible, concerns a New Zealand teenager hospitalized for donning a pair of jeans so tight they cut off his blood circulation.

James wanted his jeans tight. I mean, really tight. To accomplish this leg-numbing feat, he would jump into the bath, lather himself up with soap, forcing the denim to shrink during an estimated 30 minute ordeal and eventually he had on the tightest jeans imaginable. He then proceeded to drink a bottle of vodka with a friend and they both passed out in the sun. After drying in the direct sunlight, the denim shrank back to its original size cut-

ting off James's circulation. The pain caused him to wake from his alcohol-induced coma three hours later. His jeans were now so tight he was unable to walk or crawl towards the phone. James's cries for help were answered until an hour later when an elderly neighbor came to investigate "a weird noise." "It sounded like the high-pitch squealing of a bird in distress," the neighbor said. The reason James's cries were not recognized as human was because the shrunken jeans reduced the breathing space around his testicles making it impossible for his voice box to produce anything but a squeal.

Though the article is purely satirical it does bring to mind a serious question: Are jeans, especially super tight jeans, bad for your health?

Denim disasters

Jody Morse, a jean expert, shares some problems of wearing jeans.

Vaginal Infections

Frequent vaginal infection is the most common health risk associated with wearing jeans that are too tight. The main reason being the vagina's natural fungus tends to increase, or thrive, in areas that are warm and air restricted. The two main types of infections that are often experienced due to wearing tight jeans are vaginal yeast and bacterial infections.

Infertility

Bacterial infections of the vagina are believed to be the main cause of infertility among women who regularly wear tight jeans. However, infertility can also be experienced by men who wear jeans, or underwear, that are too tight. The main reason for this happening is because there is a lack of circulation occurring when jeans or underwear are far too tight.

Tummy troubles

Many people are known to experience digestive problems when they wear tight jeans. This is, of course, due to the fact that circulation is very poor, and with the jeans tightly hugging your stomach area, the food cannot be properly digested. People who already have pre-existing digestive problems, such as Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS), are advised not to wear jeans that are skin tight.

Blue jeans Q and A

The Web answerbag.com presents some interesting questions and answers regarding jeans health, which you might find useful. *Beijing Today* invited Xiao Xuesheng, a researcher of physical study from the Beijing Sports University, to offer some comments.

Mark: Ladies, do you prefer your guy wearing tight jeans to show off his butt or loose jeans for easy access?

Top answer out of 17: I like my guy to wear jeans that don't look stupid.

Xiao Xuesheng: Most times, jeans give off sex signals, especially tight jeans, so they are not good to wear at formal events. That is why in some companies jeans are not allowed on workdays. There is also a health reason – sitting for too long in tight jeans is bad for a male's prostate gland – so the girl's answer is pretty witty and wise and ranks top out of 17 responses.

Trouble54: How many pairs of jeans do you own?

Top answer out of 47: One pair. That's it!

Xiao Xuesheng: For most men, 10 pairs of jeans are not enough. However, it is best to own just one pair, a loose pair that is worn only one day per month. The reason? The same as the previous one.

FauxLo: What style or cut of jeans do you prefer?

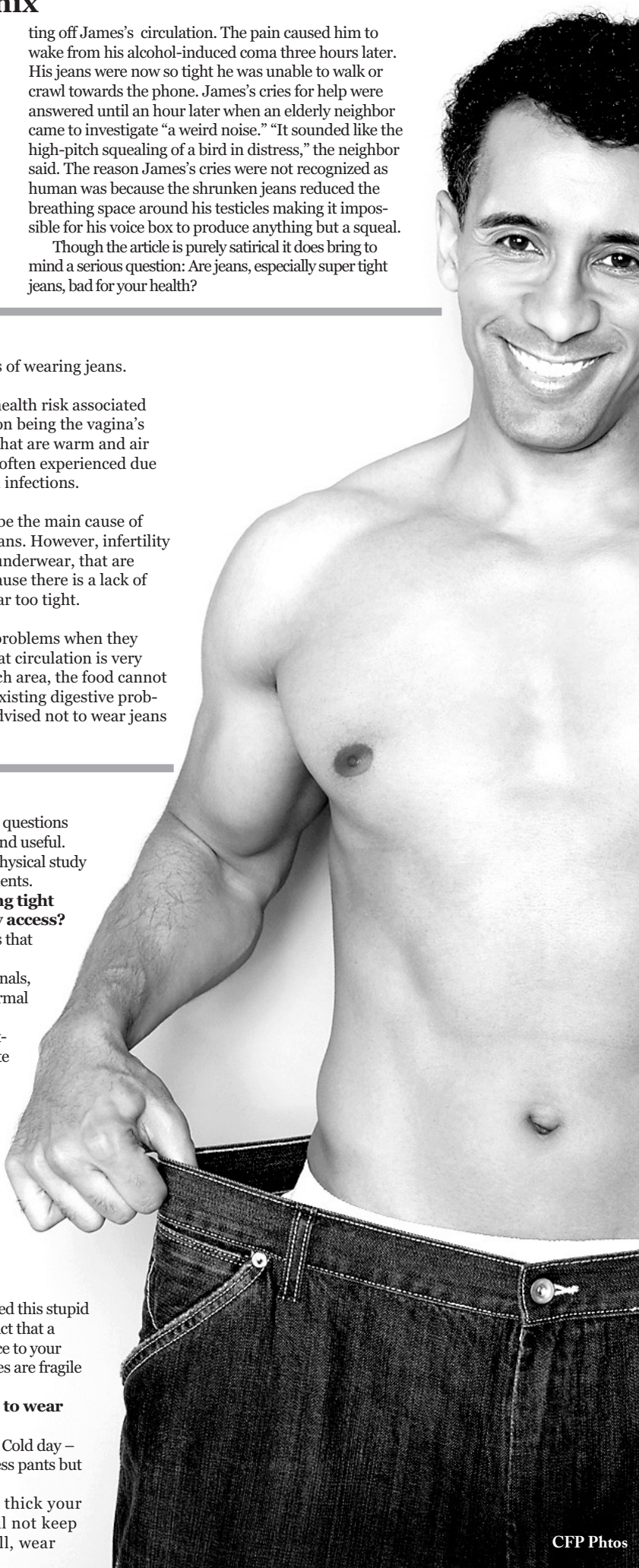
Top answer out of 4: Mid-rise boot cut.

Xiao Xuesheng: Though only four people answered this stupid question, the top response still reflects wisdom in the fact that a mid-rise boot cut does give at least some breathing space to your ankles, preventing them from getting rubbed. The ankles are fragile parts of your body.

Son Rya: Do you prefer sweat pants or jeans to wear all day?

Top answer out of 41: Well, depends on the day. Cold day – sweats. Any other day, I need to look good. Jeans or dress pants but you didn't ask about the latter.

Xiao Xuesheng: Remember, no matter how thick your jeans are, they do not insulate effectively and will not keep you warm. To protect your body from the big chill, wear something warmer.



CFP Photos

Shopping at the age gap



20

Big boys at 20 have no problem in choosing a pair of jeans. For them, jeans equate to style and fashion, so the most important question is how to match the jeans with his clothes collection. Look at **Jude Law** – a white T-shirt is the key.

Tip: Choosing tight jeans at this age is okay, as they help to highlight the shape of your hips.



30

Men at the age of 30 should try to attach maturity to their jean selection. Unnecessary accessories are unnecessary. Take **Brad Pitt** – when you see him in his white shirt, black tie and simple grey jeans, you can feel his maturity.

Tip: Tight jeans are not suitable at 30. Choose jeans that are wider, as they will make it more comfortable wearing big boots.

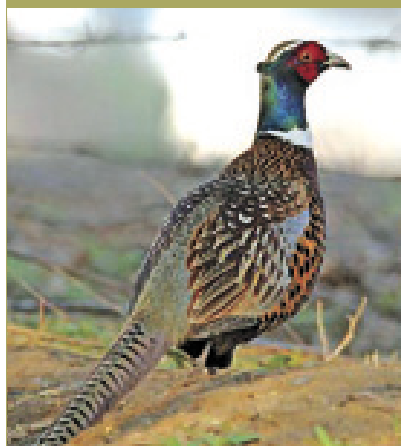


40

At this age you should adhere to **Kevin Costner's** philosophy on jeans – the more comfortable, the better. Men at 40 should be enjoying life now, so comfort is the key.

Tip: Loose jeans are best and better quality should become more important now.

How much do you know about birds in Beijing?



Photos by Guanniao.com

By Jackie Zhang

Busy life and work prevents us from paying attention to the natural environment around us. The plants, the animals, the birds; it seems like a long time since I heard birds singing outside my window.

Li Qiang is the team leader of the Birdwatching Team of Friends of Nature, an NGO dedicated to environmental protection and based in Beijing. Every week, he and the team members go to different places in Beijing to watch

The only birds I see every day are sparrows.

It does not mean that you cannot see other birds in the city. Pick a weekend day to head to a park or the outskirts of town and you will see less common birds, and even some on the National Protection List.

birds. "Each season has a different place to go for bird-watching. Both urban and suburban areas have parks and reserves where it is possible to see many kinds of birds," he said.

Outskirts

Yeyahu Lake Wetland Natural Reserve

Yeyahu Lake Wetland Natural Reserve in Yanqing District is surrounded by mountains and the Great Wall. The wetlands are rich in fish, shrimp and grass. Many species of waterfowl live there.

The reserve is home to more than 240 kinds of fowl, including five listed as China's most protected species and 34 of the second grade. It is an ideal stop for migratory birds heading south or north every fall and spring.

There are thousands of birds that migrate across China. In the reserve, thousands of swans, grus grus, geese, ducks, egrets and cranes flock. From October and April, thousands of grus grus live in the reserve throughout the

winter. In summertime, some waterfowl stay in the reserve to hatch new offspring. The reserve is also home to reed warblers and orioles.

"Yeyahu is a classical place to watch various birds," Li said. "We can see many birds and waterfowl that are not part of daily life in Beijing. Most of these birds live in southern China and pass through Beijing only for migration."

Getting there: Follow the Badaling Express Way to the Kangzhuang Exit. Then follow the signs. You can also take bus 919 and get off at Yanqingxiancheng, then taxi to the reserve.

Shidu reserve

Shidu was named for the 10 ferries that cross the Juma river in the reserve. Every place along the river, from the first ferry point to the last, is a good spot for birdwatching.

Along the path you can hear birds twitter in the trees. The White-browed Chinese Warbler, Plumbeous Water-

Redstart and Brown Dipper are a common sight. Some of the birds used to live in southern China, but have migrated to the north.

Getting there: Take a train at Beijing Nan Railway Station to Shidu, or take bus 917 and get off at the Shidu stop.

Urban area

Yuanmingyuan Park

The lakes in the Old Summer Palace are a great destination for bird lovers. Black-crowned Night herons, kingfishers and sandpipers are the main birds.

The park's silent pools may be home to black moorhen. Its black feathers are as elegant as those of a black swan.

Sandpipers tend to prefer more reedy areas. Kingfishers catch fish in the water; cuckoos sing in the trees. The birds have breathed new life into the old park.

Getting there: Buses 628, 697, 801 and 320 can take you to the park. Admission is 10 yuan per adult.

Continued on page 21 ...

Birds sighted by birdwatchers at Yeyahu Lake Wetland Natural Reserve.

CFP Photo





Photos by Guanniao.com

... continued from page 20

Summer Palace

If you have a whole day free, you can enter the park from the gate at Liulang-zhuang and walk along the lake from south to west or to north.

At noon, walk from Ruyi Gate to

the east to arrive in Houshan. If you are only free for half a day, then enter the park directly through Ruyi gate and go to Xidi, and then go to Houshan: the best places for birdwatching in the

Summer Palace. The Summer Palace has more birds than any other park in the city. It has 30 kinds, including widgeons, Black-crowned Night herons, woodpeckers

and spotted doves. **Getting there:** Buses 331, 346, 690, 732 and 817 all stop at the Summer Palace. An adult ticket is 30 yuan.

Birdwatching gear

Clothing

Wear clothes with colors that blend into the environment. Do not wear bright colors like red, yellow and white. Wear shirts with long sleeves and long pants. If you wear a coat, stuff the pockets with notebooks

and books about birding. Hats with brims can protect you from sunshine and stray branches. If you need to walk in grass or on wetlands, you should wear high-top shoes.

Tools

Long distance binoculars are great

for birdwatching, especially for active and moving birds. Long-distance, tripod-mount telescopes are better for viewing distant birds, like waterfowl.

Others

You can also prepare a birding hand-

book, a notebook and pens. The hand-book can help the novice determine which bird is which. Take notes about the birds in your notebook. After enough time spent taking notes, you will know the birds' habitats as well as they do!

How to take notes

Birds-watching notes are not only for you to record your experience, but also can provide accurate information for bird research.

You need to write down dates, times, places and weather. Then, write down the name of each kind of birds and how many you saw. Try to write

down whether the bird is female or male. If you don't know the name of the bird, write down everything you can learn by observing it, like its shape

and size, its color, its wingspan, tail, beak and neck and whether it is flying or resting. Sounds are best captured with a recorder.

Tips

According to Li Qiang, birds usually hide in trees and thickets. When normal visitors may think there are no birds around, the birds are actually hiding quietly in the shade.

- Do not approach the birds or chase them.

- If possible, go birdwatching with a professional. He can tell you where birds are according to the sounds he hears, the time and the weather.
- Every day, two hours before sunrise and two hours after sunset, are the best times to spot some birds. They are

most active during these periods. Rise early and go looking around the crack of dawn.

- Quiet places, places with lots of grass or shrubbery, places with few people and places near water and close to the mountains are the best places to

watch birds.

- Professional telescopes are necessary. Do not buy the cheap kind sold by street vendors. Go to professional stores for professional telescopes. Usually Olympus, Lycra and Zeiss are the best brands, and the price is not too high.

Professional assistance

- Join in the Birdwatching Team of Friends of the Nature. Connect to fon.org.cn or call 6523 2040 or 6512

0827. The team organizes birdwatching events and lectures.

- Go to a professional birdwatching

Web site like Guanniaowang (Bird-watching Net) at guanniao.com. You can participate in discussions on bird-

watching techniques and telescope selection. The network occasionally organizes lectures.



Group birdwatching excursions are a popular weekend activity. CFP Photo

THE DA VINCI CODE

(2006)



Movie of the Week

"The Da Vinci Code," directed by Ron Howard, is based on Dan Brown's best-selling novel. It was one of the most anticipated films of 2006. The movie combines the theory conspiracy, art, history, religion and murder.

Synopsis

Famed symbologist Professor Robert Langdon is summoned to the Louvre museum one night where a curator has been murdered, leaving behind a mysterious trail of symbols and clues. With his own survival at stake, Langdon, aided by police cryptologist Sophie Neveu, unveils a series of stunning secrets hidden in the works of Leonardo Da Vinci, all leading to a covert society dedicated to guarding an ancient secret that has remained hidden for 2000 years ...



Scene 1

Michael: Let's cover the talking points⁽¹⁾ again, Your Eminence. Many call Opus Dei a brainwashing⁽²⁾ cult. Others, an ultra-conservative Christian secret society⁽³⁾.

Bishop: We are a simple Catholic church.

Michael: Simple? With a brand-new US \$47-million headquarters in Manhattan.

Bishop: Our followers are generous, should we apologize for that?

Michael: Perhaps a less defensive tact, Your Eminence. The press continues to be harsh with us.

Bishop: We are not cafeteria Catholics. We don't pick and choose which rules to follow. We follow doctrine. Rigorously.

Michael: Does doctrine necessarily include

vows of chastity, tithing⁽⁴⁾ and atonement for sins through self-flagellation and the cilice⁽⁵⁾?

Bishop: Many of our followers are married. Many of them have families. Only a small proportion choose to live ascetic lives in the cloisters of our residential halls. But we are all united in God's work around the world. Surely that is an admirable way to lead one's life.

Michael: Why are some media referring to Opus Dei as "God's mafia"?

Bishop: Obviously, some people fear what they don't understand. And because the war finally draws to a close.

Michael: Bishop, we need to stay on message⁽⁶⁾.

Bishop: That will be all, Michael, thank you.

Scene 2

Sophie: You're saying the Holy Grail is a person? A woman?

Leigh: And as it turns out, she makes an appearance right there.

Sophie: But they are all men.

Leigh: Are they? What about that figure on the right hand of our Lord seated in the place of honor? Flowing red hair. Folded feminine hands. Hint of a bosom. No? It's called scotoma. The mind sees what it chooses to see.

Sophie: Who is she?

Leigh: My dear, that's Mary Magdalene.

Sophie: The prostitute?

Leigh: She was no such thing⁽⁷⁾. Smeared by the Church in 591 anno Domini, poor dear. Mary Magdalene was Jesus' wife.

Robert: This is an old wives' tale⁽⁸⁾.

Leigh: The original one, in fact.

Robert: There's virtually no empirical⁽⁹⁾ proof.

Leigh: He knows as well as I do. Now, my dear, the word in French for Holy Grail.

Sophie: Le Sangreal.

Leigh: From the Middle English "Sangreal" of the original Arthurian legend. Now, as two words. Can you

translate for our friend?

Sophie: Sang real, it means "royal blood."

Leigh: When the legend speaks of the chalice that held the blood of Christ, it speaks in fact of the female womb that carried Jesus' royal bloodline.

Sophie: But how could Christ have a bloodline, unless -?

Leigh: Mary was pregnant at the time of the Crucifixion⁽¹⁰⁾. For her own safety and for that of Christ's unborn child, she fled the Holy Land⁽¹¹⁾ and came to France. And here, it is said, she gave birth to a daughter, Sarah.

Sophie: They know the child's name.

Robert: A little girl.

Leigh: Yes.

Robert: If that were true, it's adding insult to injury⁽¹²⁾.

Sophie: Why?

Robert: The pagans found transcendence through the joining of male to female.

Sophie: People found God through sex?

Robert: In paganism, women were worshiped as a route to heaven but the modern Church has a monopoly on that in salvation through Jesus Christ.

Leigh: And he who keeps the keys to heaven rules the world.

Robert: Women, then, are a huge threat to the Church. The Catholic inquisition soon publishes what may be the most blood-soaked book in human history.

Leigh: The Malleus Maleficarum.

Robert: The Witches' Hammer.

Leigh: It instructed the clergy on

how to locate, torture and kill all free-thinking women.

Robert: In three centuries of witch hunts, 50, 000 women were captured, burned alive at the stake.

(By Han Manman)

Vocabulary

1. Talking point: Something, such as an especially persuasive point, that helps to support an argument or a discussion.

2. Brainwashing: a method for systematically changing attitudes or altering beliefs through the use of torture, drugs or psychological-stress techniques.

3. Tithes: the tenth part of agricultural produce or personal income set apart as an offering to God or for works of mercy, or

the same amount regarded as an obligation or tax for the support of the church, priesthood, or the like.

4. Secret society: an organization, as a fraternal society, the members of which take secret initiation oaths, share secret passwords and rites and are bound to assist each other.

5. Cilice: A small metal chain with inwardly-pointing spikes.

6. Stay on the message: to be persistent

in getting your point across. When you stay on message, you don't allow yourself to be distracted from your purpose.

7. no such thing: Means nothing, like "no such thing as a free lunch."

8. Old wives' tale: a proverb, much like an urban legend, which is generally passed down by old wives to a younger generation. Such 'tales' usually consist of superstition, folklore or unverified claims with exaggerated and/or untrue details. It is so

named for the alleged lack of sophistication of old wives.

9. Empirical: depending upon experience or observation alone, without using scientific method or theory.

10. Crucifixion: the act of crucifying.

11. Holy Land: The biblical region of Palestine.

12. Adding insult to injury: Hurting a person's feelings after doing him or her harm, or making a bad situation worse.

Chinglish story

This column focuses on Chinglish mistakes in our daily life. If you have any experiences to share, send them to Gan Tian at gantian@ynet.com.

XOXO love letters

By Gan Tian

Jason Wong, one of our interns, loves American TV shows. One of his favorites is "Gossip Girls," which is focused on different high-class students. Wow! The girls are so beautiful in this series," he screamed at me. It aroused my interest.

After watching several episodes, I found it was, in reality, so-so. For one thing, I did not quite understand the so-called "high-class" student life depicted. And I did not think the girls in the show were as beautiful as Jason had implied, so I decided to give it up. What did impress me was a song from the show which contained the lyrics, "X-O-X-O, gossip girls!"

XO? Isn't that a famous alcohol? Is this beverage popular amongst those girls? Oh, maybe, because they are, after all, "high-class" girls – they do everything ... drugs, boyfriends, sex and of course, alcohol! I did not concentrate heavily on the meaning.

However, one day I met Jane Wang online. She is one of my ex-colleagues, who now works for *Cosmopolitan*, a fashion magazine. I noticed her MSN nickname which was "XOXO, Cosmo girl" which suddenly reminded me of the song from "Gossip Girls."

"What does your nickname mean? Isn't XO a kind of wine?" I asked, like an idiot.

"Nah!" She replied, and explained to me.

The letter "X" has a similar pronunciation to the word "kiss." So if "X" equals kiss, then "O" means hugs, because when we hug each other, we usually position our arms in the shape of a circle like an "O."

"It is also the same with 'LOL,'" Cosmo girl told me, "we type 'LOL,' which means 'laugh out loud' in net jargon, but when we write emails, LOL also can mean 'lots of love.' Isn't that romantic?"

Yes, although we do not speak it out loud, I now understand that XOXO and LOL are expressions of affection and love! Love is a beautiful thing and I send you a big X and O.

**Blacklist**

Beijing Today has come up with Blacklist, a new column of words or phrases commonly misused by Chinese speakers. If you're planning to be an English teacher, reporter or employee of a multinational company, then this page is your new best friend. Watch it for each week.

Local professor: Zhu Shida

1. A wardrobe, if provide, must be sterilized.

The adverbial of condition is in a simplified form. The complete form would be: "if it is provided." In the simplified form, you must retain "provided," indicating its status of being given. So, the correct way of saying this would be: "A wardrobe, if provided, must be sterilized." Similarly, a piece of advice, when offered, must be well-intentioned.

2. The enroll examination

Enroll is a verb. It cannot be used as a noun. You have to say: "The enrollment examination," or "The entrance examination," or "The recruitment examination." So, for beginners, it is very important to be aware of the nature of each word to write it in English.

3. Fears leads selfishness.

Firstly, the word "fears" is in plural form, so the verb should be "lead" instead of "leads." When you wish to express something that will result in something else, you must have the preposition "to" follow the main verb "lead." So, this sentence should be: "Fears lead to selfishness."

Native Speaker: Joe Edwards

1. A wardrobe, if provide, must be sterilized.

If you wrote this sentence during a grammar exam, your English teacher would give you a "D." If that ever happens, take that "D" and add it to the word "provide" shown in the above example sentence giving you "provided," and correct grammar. Then, the professor will give you an "A" and what you do with that is none of my business. Show it to your father and you will probably get the car for the whole weekend. The adjusted sentence now reads, "A wardrobe, if provided, must be sterilized."

2. The enroll examination

As hard it may want to raise its little self up to the lofty position of noun and what would not, "enroll" is a verb and cannot be used as a noun. Sorry, little fella. You must say, "The enrollment examination." Other accepted ways of saying this, "The entrance exam" or "The recruitment examination."

3. Fears leads selfishness.

In this very bad grammar example we are dealing with the two "p's", preposition and plural. Firstly, the subject, "Fears" is in the plural form and so we must drop the "s" off the word, "leads." We're not done yet. Secondly, you have to add the preposition, "to", too, after the verb to finish our work here. The corrected sentence now reads, "Fears lead to selfishness." Now, grammatically, there is nothing to fear.

Signs history does not respect

By Derrick Sobodash

Some signs around town frequently draw on history and the future as strong motivators. Even half the political statements start out with the phrase "China is a country with a 5,000-year history." How history will remember this week's sign is unclear – almost as unclear as its English.

The writer hammered out the following muddled pool of words: "The respect history person, future only then will only be able by the historical respect."

Too many words. There is no reason to repeat "only" in only one sentence. Some of the

words are also placed in the wrong order. The writer is attempting to use "respect history" as an adjective to describe a person. This clumsy construction should be written as "Only the person who respects history" – English is a subject-verb-object language.

The writer then uses the adjective "historical" where he intends to use the noun form, "history." Since it is by history, then he must be talking about history respecting something. "Will" is an auxiliary verb to indicate a future action, so we can drop the word "future." The "be able to" section is garbage as well, so cut it.

只有尊重历史的人,未来才会被历史尊重
The respect history person, future only then will, only be able by the historical respect

This gets the line to "Only the person who respects history will by history be respected." That wording is fine, but there are better ways to phrase this. The above rendition sounds like some warning to treasure hunters or Indiana Jones would read while exploring an ancient temple full of booty traps.

How to write this depends on which pronouns the sign maker prefers to use. If this sign is intended to instruct readers, it could be written, "To be respected by history, one must respect history." It could also be flipped around and written more naturally as, "History only respects those who respect it."

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see any Chinglish signs, please take a picture and send it to gantian@ynet.com together with your name and address.

Friday, April 25

Exhibition

In An Instant: Moving Images and Photographic Works

Where: Three Shadows Photography Art Centre, 155 Caochangdi, Chaoyang
 When: Tue-Sun 10 am – 6 pm, until May 25
 Admission: Free
 Tel: 6432 2663 ext 8008

Music Video – Claude Closky
Solo Exhibition

Following the 2001 Venice Biennale, 2003 Rotterdam Photography Biennale, the 2006 Exhibition in Pompidou Center and the 2007 Lyon Biennale in 2008, the world-wide famous French contemporary artist Claude Closky presents his first solo show in Beijing.

Where: HAN JI YUN Contemporary Space, A 1 Beigao, Cuigezhuang, Chaoyang
 When: Daily 11 am – 7 pm, until May 18
 Admission: Free
 Tel: 6434 0266

Excessive Transition –
Geng Jianyi Solo Exhibition

The exhibition consists of an entirely new series of photographs that Geng Jianyi created in 2008. In these black-and-white pictures, the artist portrays himself in various settings that have been slightly manipulated to create a feeling of uncertainty and distorted reality.

Where: shanghART gallery, 261 Caochangdi, Chaoyang
 When: Tue-Sun 11 am – 6 pm, until May 20
 Admission: Free
 Tel: 6432 3202

Movie

Ce Que Mes Yeux Ont Vu

Where: French Culture Center, 1/F, Guangcai International Mansion, 18 Gongti Xi Lu, Chaoyang
 When: 7:30 pm
 Admission: 10-20 yuan
 Tel: 6553 2627



Concert

Fu Cong Piano Solo Concert

Who: Fu Cong
 Where: National Grand Theater, on the west side of the Great Hall of the People
 When: 7:30 pm, April 26-27
 Admission: 80-580 yuan
 Tel: 6655 0000

Stage in May

Concert

Chris Botti Solo Concert

Who: Chris Botti
 Where: Zhongshan Music Hall, inside Zhongshan Park, Dongcheng
 When: 7:30 pm, May 18
 Admission: 80-980 yuan
 Tel: 8528 5344, 6559 8306

May Flower Music Series III

Who: The China Film Symphony Orchestra of China Broadcasting Performing Arts Group

Where: Beijing Music Hall, 1 Bei Xinhua Jie, Xicheng
 When: 7:30pm, May 2
 Admission: 80-880 yuan
 Tel: 6605 7006

Pinchas Zukerman

Asia Tour Beijing Concert

Who: Pinchas Zukerman
 Where: Zhongshan Music Hall, inside Zhongshan Park, Dongcheng
 When: 7:30 pm, May 22
 Admission: 100-1,280 yuan
 Tel: 6559 8306

Ninegates Jazz
Festival 2008

Who: Geraldine Laurent
 Where: Zhongshan Music Hall, inside Zhongshan Park, Dongcheng
 When: 7:30 pm, May 28
 Admission: 20-380 yuan
 Tel: 6559 8306

Hao Weiya

Special Concert

Who: Hao Weiya
 Where: National Grand Theater Music Hall, on the west side of the Great Hall of the People
 When: 7:30 pm, May 4
 Admission: 50-280 yuan
 Tel: 6655 0000

Jay Chou 2008 World Tour
Beijing Concert

Who: Jay Chou
 Where: Beijing Workers Gymnasium, Gongti Bei Lu, Chaoyang
 When: 7:30 pm, May 1
 Admission: 180-1,280 yuan
 Tel: 6417 7845

Sound of Angel

Who: Declan Galbraith
 Where: Beijing Exhibition Theater, 135 Xizhimen Wai Dajie, Xicheng
 When: 7 pm, May 24
 Admission: 180-1,280 yuan
 Tel: 6835 4455

Opera

Madame Butterfly

Who: Central Conservatory of Music
 Where: National Grand Theater Music Hall, on the west side of the Great Hall of the People
 When: 7:30 pm, May 8-10
 Admission: 80-880 yuan
 Tel: 6655 0000

Paguita

Who: Paris Opera Ballet
 Where: National Grand Theater Music Hall, on the west side of the Great Hall of the People
 When: 7:30 pm, May 16-18
 Admission: 280-1,280 yuan
 Tel: 6655 0000

(By Li Jing)

Saturday, April 26

Exhibition

Onodera Yuki Solo Exhibition



Where: Keumsan Gallery Beijing, B0024 International Art Zone, Huantienei Dashanzi, Chaoyang
 When: Tue-Sun 11 am – 6 pm, until May 30
 Admission: Free
 Tel: 6436 6176

Early Spring – Xia Xiaowan
Solo Exhibition

Where: F/2, Beijing Today Art Museum, Building 1, 32 Baiziwan Lu, Chaoyang
 When: Daily 10 am – 5 pm, until May 25
 Admission: Free
 Tel: 5876 9392

The Dream Interrupted –
Group Exhibition

The exhibition features Yang Xun and Dong Wensheng.
 Where: F.Fine Gallery, 2 Jiu Xianqiao Lu, Chaoyang
 When: Tue-Sun 11 am – 6 pm, until June 1
 Admission: Free
 Tel: 8459 9257

Movie

Chasseurs de Dragons



Where: French Culture Center, 1/F, Guangcai International Mansion, 18 Gongti Xi Lu, Chaoyang
 When: 5 pm
 Admission: 10-20 yuan
 Tel: 6553 2627

Sunday, April 27

Exhibition

Lotus Verve – Dong Xianzhou Oil Exhibition



Dong Xianzhou followed the traditional impressionism pathway of Chinese painting, but combined it with methods of Western oil painting, through absorption, digestion, experience and experimentation to form his own style.

Where: Beijing Wan Fung Art Gallery, the Imperial Archives, 136 Nanchizi

Dajie, Dongcheng
 When: Mon-Fri 9 am – 5 pm, Sat-Sun 10 am – 5 pm, until April 28
 Admission: Free
 Tel: 6523 3320

Zhao Dewei Solo Exhibition



Where: TS1 gallery, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang
 When: Tue-Sun 10 am – 6 pm, until

May 16
 Admission: Free
 Tel: 6433 1588

A Night Walk in Winter – Wang Mao
Solo Exhibition

Where: XYZ Gallery, D 06-6-1, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang
 When: Tue-Sun 11 am – 6 pm, until May 9
 Admission: Free
 Tel: 8459 9299

Movie

Little Moth

Where: Cherry Lane Movie, Yugong Yishan, 3 Zhangzizhong Lu, Xicheng
 When: 8 pm
 Admission: 20-40 yuan
 Tel: 6404 2711